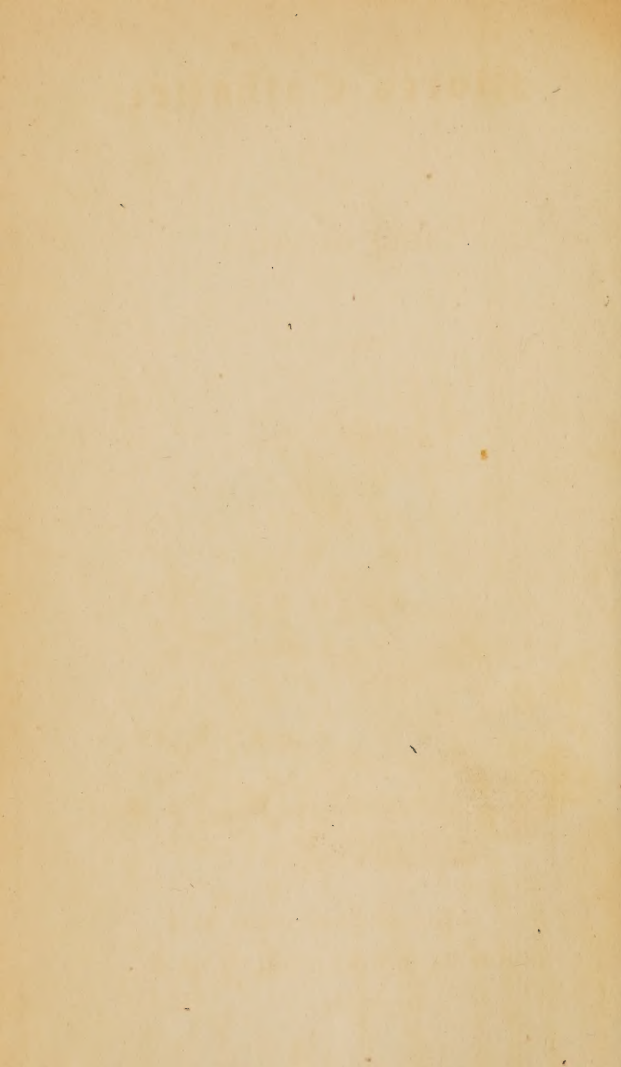


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1880.
Mores catholici



Mores Catholici;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

[Kenelm H. Digby.]

BOOK VIII.



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ERRATA.

p. 278. *for et ad, read et ad quid?*
 449. Aponno, Apono.
 Albano, Abano.

MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE EIGHTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

WHILE the heavens are showing forth the glory of God, and the firmament is declaring the work of his hands, the records of men are fulfilling a purpose no less admirable, in attesting the operation and power of his grace,—ministry, that may not unjustly be styled divine, like that of the angel seen in mystic vision by the great contemplatist and poet of the three worlds, who, as he relates, when day was sinking, appeared before him, standing on the brink of the flame, with gladness in his looks. For he who traced in chronicles the ways of men in believing days of yore, and he who taught the wisdom of the schools,—the poet, too, conversant with the people's thoughts, and those who in written monuments transmitted what the middle ages from experience knew—all with one voice, whose lively clearness, we might truly add, far surpassed our human, sang, "Blessed are the clean of heart."

This beatitude, say the scholastic commentators, is justly placed in sixth degree, since, on the sixth day, man was created in the image of his Maker, which image is obscured by sinful blot, but purged by grace, which prepares him for ascent to heaven; and while the purity which yields it implies the possession of the other precious seeds of blessed life, the same is no less necessarily included in each of them; for, saith St.


Ambrose, citing one instance as sufficient proof, "he who shows mercy loses the fruit of mercy, unless he be merciful with a clean heart ; for if he seek boasting, there is no fruit from his mercy."

The path now before us leads still higher than any which we hitherto have followed, and yet it will not separate us from the earthly course ; for though divine, it is no less a human theme, and one essential to all studies that have historical knowledge, within certain limits, for their end ; since, without accurate observation here, many things which are presented in the books of the middle ages, in the various institutions which flourished during that period, and in the different monuments of art which have survived the wreck of time, must remain inexplicable ; for, whether the question relate to a Charlemagne founding monasteries, and presiding over the Christian world, to an Edward Confessor, legislating, to a Godfrey, mounting the throne of Jerusalem, to a St. Louis, hastening to the relief of the holy land, to a Ferdinand, recovering Spain from the Mahometans, to a Gregory the Seventh, enforcing the ecclesiastical discipline, to an Innocent the Third, according to nations which turned to it with one voice for protection from the violence of despotic power, the protection of the holy see, to a Thomas of Canterbury, dying for the freedom of the church, to a Bernard, directing the counsels of princes, to a Boniface, departing to convert heathen nations, to a Bruno, retiring into the desert, to a Dunstan, substituting monks for seculars, to a Francis, embracing poverty, to a Dominick, opposing heresy, to a Guercino, painting for altars, to a count of Anjou, building churches, or only to a duke of Aquitaine, taking up his pilgrim's staff,—there will arise problems that admit of no solution, if we do not take into account the conviction and the doctrine, which prevailed universally during those ages, respecting the beatitude of the clean of heart. Nor let any one disdain our solicitude, if it be remarked also, that some of those high pleasures, arising from the imagination and from poetry, are not altogether unconcerned with the view to which this subject leads. Who will not feel a charm in learning what were the thoughts, the religious and philosophic thoughts, of those different great, heroic, or engaging personages, with whose external form and character historians or poets may have made

him long familiar? How delightful to be introduced to them in their meditative hours; to hear their calm soliloquies, or their conversations philosophical, on the subjects which have an equal interest for ourselves? Then indeed the ruins that are scattered everywhere will be able to excite in the mind a useful remembrance, and in the heart a strong emotion. It will no longer be the artist only who visits with advantage the rock, beneath which hermits once were sheltered, the poor grey abbey, tottering to its fall, the feudal towers, to which it so often looked for protection, and the ancient seats of just authority, that so long sheltered peaceful holy kings; no philosopher, no Christian, will then ever pass them by without a wise reflection, or without a tear. Researches of this nature, it is true, cannot be concluded in brief space, and without labour; we shall, besides, in the beginning, have to traverse ground that will seem to those who are familiar with the instructions of faith, as void of any literary interest, from its appearing at the first glance to yield only what every book of devotion can supply; but they will view it differently, if they keep in mind that our object in approaching it is to hear those speak who are seldom interrogated by others; and that the authors who address them will be men of the middle ages, whom, perhaps, they have never met before, excepting on the page of Dante, or of some other mighty genius of the olden time. They will then feel that the words, independent of the truths divine which they convey, acquire a solemnity purely human, which men of hearts like ours, unsanctified and blind, may pretend without folly to appreciate; for they are those of authors whose volumes are not always accessible, though their glory lives yet on the tongue of poets, historians, and philosophers of a past world; men so venerable and great on all accounts, that whatever is uttered by them has a distinct value, in consideration of its having fallen from their lips. Listening to their discourse, indeed, will make our progress slow; but, as Plato observes, in reply to some who were for avoiding delay, "We must not refuse to pursue the longest road, which may lead with greatest certainty to the object of our enquiry; for it would be ridiculous to use every effort in exposing with the greatest exactness and clearness things of the least worth, and not to esteem the greatest as worthy of being

determined with the most precision, and while the greatest subject of learning is that which instructs us in the idea of the highest good, assuredly there is no result of historical knowledge more important than that which enables us to learn in what manner the men of former times were able to conceive and secure it. Still I am aware, as Wadding says in the beginning of his eleventh volume, that the things which are here to be published respecting the admirable piety of men and women, may seem frivolous to those whose ears are accustomed to grand descriptions of republics, to narratives of battles and other military operations; but, as he continues, the philosophy of Christ has this peculiar property, that while nothing is more contemptible than its first, nothing is more divine than its subsequent aspect; for it inflames minds, not with the thirst of blood and slaughter, or with the cupidity of vain glory; but with humanity and gentleness, and the love of solid and true virtue *."

There was, however, a difficulty greater still, that might have discouraged us from pursuing this history any further; for here we enter upon an investigation that will lead immediately to holy ground, towards which men of hearts like ours should pause before they dare so much as to turn even their eyes. Yet I was tempted to proceed, when I considered that in this journey through the literature of past ages, as in that of life, the profane may join the company of blessed pilgrims, and pass in at their side, where alone they would have never thought of entering; that then, on their return, they may describe what they have seen, and repeat what they have heard; and that to their rhapsodies perpetual sober men may turn a willing ear, as though they could discern what is holy on their lips, so that even the simple wanderer who strays uncommissioned like myself to explore the beauties, and inhale the perfume of the ancient world of faith, may approach it without presumption, and yet with confidence;

"For saint  ave hands that pilgrim's hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss."

The Angel of the School, Richard of St. Victor, Bernard, and Francis—such are the deathless minds which leave, where they have past, a track of light that will

* Annal. Minorum, tom. xi.

sustain us now. With them, by aid of sentences transcribed, our souls shall know communion, till, as the poet saith, from that glorious intercourse, as from a mine of magic store, we shall draw words which are weapons; round the hearts of some there shall grow the adamantine armour of their power, and from their fancy wings of golden hue." Therefore let this book be taken up as if the limbs of him who wrote it had long been scattered in the dust, and it had been only copied, as in effect it is, from some huge and antique volume, bound by two solemn clasps, "as neither to be opened nor laid by but with due thought profound."

Omnia bona corporis ordinantur ad bona animæ sicut ad finem *. This axiom, laid down by the Angel of the School, is a key to unlock the secrets of the middle ages; for during the predominance of faith, all goods of the body, all important institutions, all offices, all combinations of intellectual and material things that received the highest sanction, were ordained to cleanness of heart as to their end. Therefore, in order to comprehend the history of those ages, we must previously learn what was understood by cleanness of heart, and what were the precepts generally given for its acquirement. When this point has been ascertained, it will be required to show in what manner and to what extent that interior disposition affected the course of human events, and the institutions and manners of society, after which a wide and truly enchanting field will open before us, while tracing the immediate and temporal verification of the divine promise, that those who attained to it should see God.

"As health is the nature of the body," says St. Bernard, "so purity is the nature of the heart; for with a disturbed eye God cannot be seen, and the human heart is made for this end, that it should see its Creator †."

By cleanness of heart was understood, therefore, a restoration of the original state of the human character, and consequently something very different from that condition of conscience at which men arrive by natural means, the purity of which may be estimated by the one simple observation, that there is no inconsistency between the sense of the modern proposition, "that the majority of men, by a happy necessity, are constrained to be moral;"

* St. Thom. sum. 9. 11. art. 5.

† De Divin. Serm. XVI.

and the conclusion to which Socrates came, that men do much more evil than good, beginning from their childhood *, testimony of human reason to its own misery, which is borne also by the ancient poet, who declares “that few there are whom just God loves, or ardent virtue raises to the sky †.”

The purity of heart which led to blessed vision, was understood in ages of faith to consist in a conformity with the divine image; but in order to supply a wisdom that was practical, and free from ambiguity in terms, it was necessary that some further explanation, in the form of axioms, should be laid down; for, as St. Thomas observes, “it would not suffice for beatitude that man should be assimilated to God in regard to power, unless he were assimilated to him in regard to goodness ‡.” Moreover, as St. Gregory remarks, “God is holy; but of a holiness invisible, inaccessible, incomprehensible. God is not holy in the manner that we ought to be; and holiness in him is not what it ought to be in us. For in us, holiness is inseparable from penitence; which can no more accord with God than sin. In us, a part of holiness consists in subjection, dependence, obedience; for this is what sanctifies us; and in God it is exactly the contrary. We are holy by despising ourselves; and God is holy in glorifying himself: he is holy in an entire and perfect possession of his beatitude, and we are holy by patience in our misery.” Nor is this all: for, as the Angel of the School saith, “If any one should seek to be like God in respect to justice, as if by his own virtue, and not by the virtue of God, he would sin; or, if he were to seek as the last end that similitude with God which is given by grace, wishing to have it by the virtue of his nature, and not by the divine assistance, according to the ordinance of God, he would sin §.”

Already, therefore, we may begin to perceive how well guarded from error, at the very first step on the way to perfection, were the men of those ages, and what a protection was afforded to society from the calamities and horrors, to which a want of Catholic instruction on this very point has frequently led in later times. Again, say these high teachers, “the holiness of man must be some-

* Plato, *Hippias Major*.

† Sum. p. 1. Q. xi. a. 4.

‡ *Æneid*, tom. vi. 129.

§ Sum. p. 1. Q. lxxiii. art. 3.

thing different from that of the incorporeal Divinity." And here I would invite the reader to remark, that when treating on this difference, the great Catholic philosophers of the middle ages evince a clearness and good sense, which some of our contemporaries, who have not had a personal acquaintance with their writings, are apparently but little prepared to find in them. Of the great leading mysteries of our moral nature, as far as relates to an observation of facts, the ancient sages were not ignorant. The Pythagoreans said, that men should aim at purification, which consisted in separating, as far as possible, the mind from the body, and accustoming it to dwell by itself, free from the contagion of the body *." "The great object of a philosopher," says Plato, "must be the purification of his mind; and this purification can only be effected by separating, as far as possible, the soul from the body, and accustoming it to live and dwell by itself, and delivering it from the body as if from chains; and this full and perfect deliverance is named death, and this should be the object of every real philosopher's desire †." Cicero, too, in the first book of the *Tusculans*, speaks of separating the mind, as far as possible, from the body, which is learning to die; and he says, that "while we remain on earth, this will be similar to a celestial life." Later philosophers without the church have expressed the same convictions. "Hitherto," says Novalis, "soul has prevailed only here and there; when will it have universal sway?"

The similarity between these views and the Catholic doctrine, must have struck every one; but it is no less clear, that there is much to modify and change before they can be brought to a real and complete agreement with it. Certainly, as Savonarola desires the philosophers of Florence to remark, whatever the ancient sages laid down respecting purity of heart, and the necessity of purging the mind from the misdirected love of sensible things, is not only enforced by the Catholic religion, but infinitely extended and reduced to practice in a manner that would have been incredible to them. It would be wholly useless to adduce evidence in proof of a fact so generally known as the conviction of men during ages of

* Jamblichus *Adhortat. ad Philosoph.* cap. 13.

† Plato, *Phædo*, 67.

faith, that the passions might become domestic foes, against which it would be impossible to provide too many securities. Their language with respect to the danger of sense is more frequently taxed with exaggeration than with leniency; for in truth they saw connections which the men of later times cannot or will not discern: they knew what was the genius of pleasure, how unlike in reality to her appearance; they saw her deformed and cruel, and it seemed as if they continually heard her horrid reply to the poor victim who, too late, discovered her treachery. "Sink with me then; we two will sink on the wide waves of ruin, even as a vulture and a snake, outspent, drop, twisted in inextricable fight, into a shoreless sea."

Nevertheless, of the light in which the passions were regarded by the Catholic instructors, and of the relative position of sense and spirit in the Catholic philosophy, the moderns are in general profoundly ignorant. They have yet to learn that the abuse, not the use, of nature, was condemned by it. The guides who apply that medicine to the intelligence of men, only observe that when the mind revolts from God, the senses in their turn revolt from the mind. In this situation they remark, that the body, though willingly yet impatiently follows the senses; and, as Marsilius Ficinus observes, "that thence arise the most monstrous opinions, and manners the most foul and execrable*." These guides may remark indeed, with Plato, that "the body, through its wants, is the subject of a thousand occupations to deprive us of leisure; that the infirmities which it entails upon us, prevent us often from the search of truth; and that the passions with which it moves us, fill us with a multitude of delusions, so that we cannot see the real nature of things; for that wars, and insurrections, and battles, have no other origin but the body, and the desires arising from it†." Where expressions are stronger, and such as seem to warrant our concluding that the very use of nature, and the work of the Creator himself, are reprobated, a closer inspection will convince us, that these arise merely from a consideration of some peculiarity of circumstance, involving danger, of some accidental incongruity produced by the position of an individual, or perhaps from a willing re-

* Marsil. Ficin. Epist. lib. ii.

† Plato, Phædo, 66.

nouncement of what is known to be intrinsically good and innocent, in order to satisfy the desires of a generous and feeling heart, as in the instance related by St. Martin of Tours, of the young maiden, whom Injuriosus, a senator of Auvergne, sought in marriage, and who exclaimed on her bridal day, "Would to heaven that the kisses of my nurses had been given to me in my shroud! The pomps of the world disgust me when I think of my Redeemer pierced upon the cross. I cannot bear the sight of diadems glittering with precious stones, when I think of his thorny crown!" Annihilation, however, or the rejection of any part of the Creator's work, as evil in itself, was a process unknown in the philosophy of the clean of heart; and so far were the Catholic instructors from imagining that sense is opposed to the spiritual life, that, according to their unanimous voice, the latter must commence with it. St. Bernard affirms this expressly. "As we are carnal," saith he, "our desires and our lives must commence by the flesh; and if this flesh be well regulated, if it be contained in order, perfecting itself by degrees under the guidance of grace, it will finally owe to the spirit the compliment of its perfection. It is not that which is spiritual which goes in the first line, but that which is animal. We must first bear the resemblance of the earthly man, before we bear that of the heavenly man *." "Qui futurus erat etiam carne spiritualis," says St. Augustin; "factus est mente carnalis†." Nor was it only in the first steps of the spiritual life that these guides accepted the attendance of sense. They required it during the arduous progress to consummate the union of the soul with God. Let us hear Hugo of St. Victor: "There is a certain medium to which the body ascends, that it may approach to spirit; and again, to which the spirit descends, that it may approach to body. Unless Moses had ascended, and God descended, they would not have met. Thus the spirit also ascends, and God descends, in the same manner as the body had ascended and the spirit descended. The body ascends by sense, the spirit descends by sensuality. The spirit ascends by contemplation, and God descends by revelation‡." Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect;

* Bern. de Amore Dei.

— † De Civ. Dei.

‡ Hugo S. Vict. de unione Corporis et Spiritus.

but as we proceed further, we shall have a more fitting occasion for hearing his sublime words. The passions, therefore, were to be directed, not extirpated; and St. Clement of Alexandria cites, with an approval which would have been echoed by all spiritual guides, the words of Plato, in the third book of his Republic: “*Ἐπιμελεῖσθαι σώματος δεῖν ψυχῆς ἕνεκα ἀρμονίας* *.” “Passions, when they are consequent to reason,” says the Angelic Doctor, “are good; they exercise a twofold influence, by redundancy and by election; that is to say, when the superior part of the soul is intensely moved towards something, the inferior part also follows its motion, and thus the passion existing in the sensitive appetite is consequently a sign of the intensity of the will, and indicates a greater moral goodness. In another manner also they act, by way of election; that is, when a man chooses with the judgment of reason to be affected by some passion, that he may work more promptly by the co-operation of the sensitive appetite; and thus the passion of the soul adds to the goodness of the action †.” If the body were annihilated, and soul to have universal sway, it is not so certain that the consequence would be a paradise on earth. The scholastic philosophers remarked, that the soul is susceptible of some kinds of evil delight, which cannot be traced to the senses; as when it is delighted with pride, without any imagination. For the senses cannot represent this to it, nor can it be thought to be white or black, harmonious or harsh, sweet or bitter, odoriferous or of unpleasant odour, soft or hard. There are indeed, say they, more kinds of delight, in which the soul is delighted without the senses, than those to which they are instrumental ‡.” Nor is this all; for the very difficulty of reconciling the use of passions with obedience to the eternal reason, was said by the schoolmen to conduce to the perfection of man. St. Augustin remarks, that the passion of mercy serves reason; and St. Thomas observing that the Stoics represented all passions of the soul as evil, says, “If we name passions simply, all the movements of the sensitive appetite, it appertains to the perfection of human good, that these passions should be

* Stromat. lib. iv. c. 4.

† St. Thom. Sum. p. 1. Q. xxiv. art. 3.

‡ S. Anselmi de Similitudinibus, cap. 20.

moderated by reason; for, since the good of man consists in reason as the root, that good will be so much the more perfect, as it can be applied to more things which agree with man; therefore no one can doubt but that it belongs to the perfection of moral good that the acts of the exterior members should be directed by the rule of reason *."

The angel of the school shrinks not from the most delicate and subtle investigations here, and solves a difficulty in the way of reconciling cleanness of heart with conformity to the present disposition of nature in a manner most strikingly characteristic of the bright school whose hallowed light shows all things beautiful and pure. "Some of the ancient doctors," saith he, "considering the nature of concupiscence, supposed that in the state of innocence things had been otherwise ordained;" and St. Gregory Nyssen said that the human race would have been multiplied as the angelic, and that it was only from foreseeing the fall and its consequences that God created man male and female. But this is not to speak rationally; for the things which are natural to man were neither taken away nor given by sin: but it is manifest that the multiplication of the human race was ordained naturally as that of other creatures, connected with which two things are to be considered,—that which the order of nature requires, and a certain deformity of immoderate concupiscence, which was not in the state of innocence when the inferior faculties were subject to reason. Not that purity was passionless, as some say; for all sensible delight was so much the greater, as nature was purer and more susceptible: but that the power of concupiscence did not inordinately prevail in despite of reason, as one temperate in food has no less pleasure than one intemperate: and to this agree the words of St. Augustin, that "the state of innocence did not exclude delight, but only the tyranny of sense and sin-bred disquietude of mind; and therefore in that state continence was not laudable, when there was fecundity without sin †." St. Augustin says that "original rectitude consisted in perfect subjection of body to the mind;" and the Catholic instructors shew that this subjection in general may be in some degree re-established by maintaining the rational faculty in

* 1. Q. xxiv. art. 3.

† St. Thom. Sum. p. 1. 9. xcvi. art. 2.

subjection to God, the eternal reason. Modern philosophers remark with Novalis, that by faith man arms and strengthens all his powers, and that susceptibility and passion become durable and spiritual actions. The scholastic teachers who distinguish fourteen beatitudes of soul and body, seven of which they say, relating to the body, cannot be perfected on earth, but will be enjoyed in perfection hereafter *, would have found no difficulty in subscribing to the opinion of a late philosopher, who says, “The sentient principle may adhere to us in another state, and I sometimes imagine that many of those powers which have been called instinctive, belong to the more refined clothing of the spirit, which death may not destroy, though the organs of gross sensation, the nerves and brain, will be destroyed †.”

In what, then, was to consist the conformity which makes clean the heart of man? Let Albert the Great reply to this question in the name of Catholic generations: “The image of God, in the soul, consists,” saith he, “in these three powers—reason, memory, and will; and so long as these are not wholly impressed by God, the soul is not deiform according to its primary creation; for God is the form of the soul by whom it ought to be impressed as if wax by a seal, and stamped as if stamped with a seal; and this cannot be effected unless reason be perfectly, as far as its capacity permits, illuminated with the knowledge of God, which is the highest truth, and the will be perfectly affected to loving the highest goodness, and the memory be fully absorbed in contemplating and enjoying eternal felicity. Therefore all phantasms, species, images, and forms of all things detached from the idea of God, must be expelled from the mind, that your exercise concerning God within yourself may depend wholly on the sole naked intelligence, affection, and will.” He then proceeds to show that the end of all exercises is to intend and rest in the Lord God within ourselves by the purest intelligence and the most devout affection—an exercise which is not carried on in fleshly organs and in exterior senses, but by that which constitutes man—intelligence and affection. Therefore he concludes, as long as man plays with phantasms and senses,

* S. Anselmi de Similit. cap. 47.

† Sir H. Davy, Dialog. iv. 215.

so as to rest in them (for that is undoubtedly his meaning), he cannot be said to have escaped from the motions and limits of his bestial nature, or of that part of him which he has in common with beasts; because these know and are affected by phantasms, and by such sensitive or sensible species, and not otherwise, from not having a higher force of soul. "But it is different," he adds, "with man, created according to intelligence and affection, and free-will, in the image and similitude of God; in each of which faculties he ought to be immediately impressed and united with him *." "The soul," says Louis of Blois, "disengaged from all affection contrary to order, tends naturally towards its principle, which is God; for God is the natural place of the soul, and it is only there that it can find rest. Let us seek for purity, let us seek for light, let us remember our greatness! Let us consider that the image of God is imprinted on our souls; let us unite ourselves to him by a true charity, as were united to him the holy apostles, the holy martyrs, and the confessors, and the innumerable virgins who now contemplate him face to face in heaven, in the company of his holy mother, the first in sanctity, the first in all perfections after her divine Son †."

These hallowed teachers proceed, however, to define the grace of this beatitude in more specific terms. "With two wings," says Thomas à Kempis, "is man raised above the earth, namely, simplicity and purity—simplicity in the intention, purity in the affection—simplicity intending God, purity apprehending and tasting him." St. Bernard says, that "this purity of heart consists in two things—in seeking the glory of God, and the utility of our neighbour. For the rational power to be clean, it should abstain," he remarks, "from three things—from duplicity of intention, falsity of opinion, and depravity of thought; for the concupiscible power to be clean, it should be pure from three things—from terrene affection, obscene delight, and hurtful operation; and for the irascible power to be pure, it should be clean from the fear that causes an evil humiliation, which leads fallen man to idolatry, astrology, sortilege, and other superstitions which horribly stain the human heart ‡." Finally, St.

* Albert. Mag. de Adhærendo Deo, cap. 3, 4.

† Louis de Blois, chap. v. Institution Spirituelle.

‡ S. Bern. Serm. x.

Thomas supplies a definition in few comprehensive words, saying, "Every human work is right and virtuous when it agrees with the rule of divine love; but when it disagrees with this rule, it is neither good nor right *."

While listening thus, we can conceive how each term of these definitions might be illustrated by what history exhibits; for, recurring to what St. Bernard says, and remarking at the same time with Richard of St. Victor, that the spirit of man is sometimes borne to something good, to which is annexed something carnal, which delights humanity and secretly betrays the mind, and it knoweth it not †, we might show from history how pure and undivided was become the human heart. Rodriguez furnishes a most remarkable example, where he says that St. Ignatius once examined himself to inquire how long his affliction would last if the society which he had instituted were to be dissolved; and it seemed to him, provided it was not his fault, that he should want only a quarter of an hour's recollection and prayer to free himself from all the trouble that this would give him. Such was the qualification indicated by St. Bernard; and how unearthly pure must have been the heart that thus possessed it! how detached from all finite things, and dissolved in the love and vision of eternal God! O how bitter, to men who are only cleansed without, is the thought that any work of their creation should have an end! See with what intense passion, with what earnest affection of personal interest misunderstood, the authors of systems opposed to Catholic faith have in every age pursued their favourite schemes of innovation: they want only a quarter of an hour to recover serenity?—Say, rather, the eternal years. Such is the contrast between men who see themselves and those who see God. In the sixth book we remarked the delicate sense of justice which existed in the hearts of men in ages of faith; but where shall we now find words to describe their purity? Let us hear Richard of St. Victor: "The Spirit of the Lord," saith he, "daily in his elect tempers insensibly the multitudinous and multiform affections of the human heart, and resolves them into one harmony, and, like a skilful harper who extends and tightens the chords of his instrument, so doth it reduce them to a certain concord, until

* Op. iv. c. l.

† In Cantica Canticor.

a mellifluous and ineffably sweet melody resounds in the ears of the Lord like the sound of many harpers harping on their harps." And then he proceeds, making use of daily experience, arguing from what he finds on earth, to suggest an idea of heaven. "For," he continues, "if such a wondrous harmony and multitudinous concert can rise from one heart out of such a plurality of affections, what will be the concordant consonance of the celestial spirits in such a multitude of angels, and of holy souls exulting and praising him who liveth for ever and ever*."

St. Clement of Alexandria had described this disposition of soul as belonging to his gnostic or true Christian, "who, whether eating or drinking, or whatsoever doing, even when dreaming, does and thinks what is holy, that at all times he may be pure for prayer; who with angels prays as he is himself angelic, and never without a holy guardian; for if he prays alone, he has a chorus of saints standing with him†."

The serene angelic purity of the hallowed heart was thought to manifest itself even on the countenance; and hence the care which the profound artists of the middle age evinced to transfer the utmost grace and beauty into all their representations of sacred subjects. "I am indignant," says St. Anselm, "against bad painters, when I see them paint our Lord under a deformed figure‡."

Savonarola, from an observation of the effect of the mysteries of faith upon the human countenance, draws an argument to prove the divinity of the Catholic religion. "This external expression, which so often led to memorable conversions, arises," he says, "from a supernatural beauty of mind which imparts to the body a corresponding grace. The faith and love which produce this exterior beauty cannot be a deception, for it is capable of leading men to a celestial life, and falsehood cannot thus penetrate the heart of man§:"—as creatures approach to the beauty of God the fairer they become; "for," he observes, in one of his sermons cited by Rio, "if you take two women in this assembly equally beautiful as to form, it will be the holiest of the two that will

* Richardi S. Victoris de Contemplatione, p. 1. lib. iii. c. 24.

† Stromat. lib. vii. c. 12.

‡ S. Anselmi cur Deus Homo, cap. 2.

§ Triumph. Crucis, lib. ii. 12.

excite most admiration amongst the spectators, and the palm will not fail to be decreed to her even by carnal men *."

"If the body be beautiful," asks Diego de Stella, "doth not this beauty proceed from the soul? Take away the soul, and what is viler than the body? If the body, then, be thus beautiful, how much more oughtest thou to think thy soul beautiful, and to love that which is the cause of the body's beauty †." This beauty of holy souls is compared by the teachers of wisdom to that of a sanctuary: "His mind," saith one, "had all the quiet, purity, and beauty of a temple;" "The soul that hath God within it," saith another, "is a temple of God, in which divine mysteries are celebrated ‡." Even their chronicles are full of instances to illustrate the justice of their similitude: "In Gervine," says the monastic historian of St. Riquier, "was fulfilled that true sentence, 'Ubi fidelis anima, ibi est templum Dei §.'" It is a beauty commemorated even on their solemn tombs, as may be witnessed in the epitaph on Hildegard, queen of Charlemagne, in the church of blessed Arnulf at Metz:—

" Huic tam data fuit florentis gratia formæ,
Qua non occiduo pulchrior ulla floret.
Attamen hanc speciem superabant lumina cordis,
Simplicitasque animæ, interiorque decor."

If proof were to be demanded of the predominance of this intellectual beauty in ages of faith, one need not look farther than to the offices of the church; for the love with which they were so generally regarded, as we observed in a former place, most clearly proves that they corresponded with the hearts of men. And here I cannot refrain from proposing that a comparison be instituted between the solemn hallowed light of words, so bright and heavenly, which issued from the choir in those days, when even every rustic village church heard the regular office duly sung, and the new litanies which England at some altars hears repeated more frequent than the

* Serm. on Frid. after 3d Sund. of Lent.

† On the Contempt of the Word, Part I. 73.

‡ S. Bernardi de interiori Domo, cap. iv.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Rich. cap. xxvi. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

names of Mary and of the saints. The sheep, we are told, (poor witless ones!) are fed with what their taste approves, while what is canonical must never pass their lips in public, for fear the dark intruder should deride. O patience! that canst endure to put to silence the angelic thoughts and the seraphic aspirations that of yore were uttered within Catholic churches, as they are still wherever faith prevails, in order to comply with the false wise, who say that hunger of new viands tempts their flock, and that the more remote from ancient pastures the stragglers wander, so much the more they come home to the sheepfold: so customs, laws, and offices are changed, and vulgar coarse sentences provided—held in great esteem as pure, forsooth, because every blot of sin mentioned here and there in Scripture is enumerated broadly in continuous strain with prayer to be delivered from it; and so there be no lack of words, detached and loosely strung together from the book of God, the composer has won the meed he sought. But not alone the fathers who sat in council, and the holy hooded men who served the sanctuary, but the unlettered peasants in the middle ages would have rejected offices like these; they would have been judged not only offensive to refined and to scholastic ears, but also to the instinct of the pure.

But, for we have wandered, let us seek the forward path again.

Sweet hues of saintly lustre were spread over the serene aspect of the clean heart, so multiplied that of each it would be hardly possible to tell. Its deep humility deserves, however, an especial notice. "How can you with a sound conscience call yourself the chief of sinners?" was a question put to the seraphic father by one of his blest fellowship; to whom he said, "If Christ had shown such mercy to the most wicked of men, I think he would have been more grateful to God than I am*."

Again, it would be difficult for men who have not been admitted to a participation in its faith to estimate with justice its sincerity, since they of the world are conversant only with such hearts as verify what the Master of the Sentences observes,—that "lying hypocrisy follows the rejection of faith, that in words may be the piety which

* S. Bonavent. Vita S. Franc.

the conscience hath lost *.” In relation to conversational intercourse, there is another occasion for remarking the supernatural influence of this purity; for of that abject temper which fears to offend God by actions, and, as if in compensation, revels in the abuse of the unruly member, gloating on such images as show humanity in closest alliance with sordid creatures of the earth, we find no trace in these ages, when desire of beatitude necessarily produced a Platonic delicacy of expression. No one who dwelt within tidings of the school could ever fancy that, provided he abstained from works that have no relish of salvation in them, he might resemble Diogenes in speech.

Peter Aldobrandini used to say, that a person who had contracted the cynic style, whatever might be the purity of his manners in other respects, did not deserve the name of man, as he must have lost all sense of the dignity of his nature. The sentence of the great apostle against evil words, and the comment of St. Bernard, who held the hearer guilty as the wretch who uttered them, quelled the tyrannous gust of those discoloured souls which loved the confines of impurity †.

With respect to that development of the heart's renovation which consisted in a scrupulous adherence to the dictates of conscience, it is obvious that the history of the ages of faith would furnish an immense field for interesting and curious discourse. “A man ought rather to suffer death than consent to sin venially:”—this is what St. Thomas teaches ‡. And even profane history has continual occasion to tell of men who made their lives conform to this rule. In fact, wherever we read of one like Thomas Welles, abbot of Croyland in the reign of Henry III., *vir venerabilis et eximie sanctitatis* § (and where do we find a page in the annals of the middle ages without allusion to such men?) we may be assured that this was the solemn and inflexible principle of his life. Let us hear Louis of Blois, who in few words lays open the heart of Catholics in ages of faith: “Where is that

* Petr. Lombard. lib. Sent. Prolog.

† Drexelius de Univers. Vitiis Linguæ, xxxiv.

‡ In IV. Sent. Dist. 19. 992. a 3.

§ Hist. Croyland, in *Rer. Angl. Script.* tom. i.

fear of God which is to exist for ever—the perfect fear? Attend!—I am about to propose a question which I beg you will address to yourself: If God should come in the midst of us, and should enable us to hear his voice (and certainly he never ceases to do so in his Scriptures), and should say to each of us, ‘You wish to commit sin: well, then, commit sin; do what you like; refuse yourself nothing; seize whatever pleases you; destroy whatever gives you offence; if you should be inclined to rob, rob—if to strike, strike—if to serve such or such an object, serve it; let no one resist you; let no one say to you, What are you doing? do not that; why have you done that? Let every thing that can flatter you, be yours; live in the midst of this abundance of every thing that can please you, not only for a time, but for ever;—only, you must never behold my face!’—my brethren, you shudder!—well, then, this shudder is that perfect fear of which I speak. It teaches me that it dwells in your heart, and it is that which shall endure for endless ages. Why would your hearts be seized with such fear if God should say, ‘You shall never see my face; you shall abound in all earthly goods; you shall swim in delights; I do not force you to renounce them; you shall keep all that—what more do you wish?’ This chaste and perfect fear would mourn no less, would shed no fewer tears, and it would cry out, ‘Ah, Lord, take away from me all the rest, but suffer me to behold thy face! God of virtue,’ would it cry with the Psalmist, ‘convert us, and show us thy face, and we shall be saved *!’”

The object we are now following might naturally lead us on the ground of penitential history, to speak of that desire to cancel sin of which we formerly gave instances. But, without retracing our steps, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to produce a few examples of that sensitiveness of conscience which arose from purity of heart, or from the strong desire of attaining to it. Now what do the records of the middle ages attest? We can judge from a few specimens respecting the produce that might be gathered from this deep abundant mine. Passages, then, of this kind occur. Brother Astorg, a monk of Mans Ada, of the Cistercian order, came humbly into the presence of Pope Innocent III., saying, that while in

* Louis de Blois, *Psychagog.* lib. ii. cap. 6.

the world, exercising the office of a physician, he gave medicine to a certain monk, but, being engaged in other affairs, he delayed returning to him. The other, after taking the medicine, neglected to use the care which he had enjoined, refrained not from things he had prohibited, and in consequence incurred death. Astorg, though by advice of his abbot raised to sacred orders, suffered from the reproach of his conscience, because, if he had practised more exact diligence towards the patient, perhaps he would not have died. The Pope, however, commanded him to minister under the divine fear in the orders which he had received, and only to be more diligent in his observance of the rule in consideration of what had occurred *. Again, the same pontiff is consulted respecting a certain monk who, believing that he could cure a woman who had a tumour in the throat, by opening it with an instrument as a surgeon, performed that operation; and when the tumour had subsided, he prescribed to her not to expose herself to the wind in any manner; but the woman, neglecting his orders when the harvest was reaping, exposed herself incautiously to the wind, so that much blood came from the opening, and the woman died, acknowledging that it was by her own imprudence. The question now was, whether that monk, being a priest, could lawfully exercise the sacerdotal office. The Pope replied, that although he sinned in taking another's office upon himself, yet, if he did it through pity and not through cupidity, and if he was well skilled in the surgical art, and if he gave all his attention, he is not to be condemned for the woman's fault, so grievously that, after worthy satisfaction, he should not be received to mercy and permitted to celebrate. Otherwise all sacerdotal office is to be interdicted to him absolutely. Another consultation is to this effect: A certain scholar, fearing that robbers had entered the hospice where he lay, taking a little sword, rose from his bed, went to seek a light, and, at the door, found the thief, who began to struggle with him, threw him on the ground, and wounded him almost to death; the scholar, repelling force by force, wrested the sword from the robber and struck him again, but still with moderation; upon which the thief took flight, and escaped. At break of day his fellow-scholars

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xii. 60.

sought the robber, and found him wounded; they then brought him before the potesta of Vicenza, to whom he denied having been the robber. The potesta sent his officers to the same scholar, to ask what he knew, who gave up the short weapon which he had taken from him, and also the shoes which he had taken off his feet lest he should make a noise, but said he knew nothing more. The potesta gave up the robber to suffer the penalty, who, after a cruel punishment, went to a convent and there died after three days. The scholar, moved with compunction and fear, desired to know whether he could be promoted to holy orders; and the Pope decided that there was no impediment *.

Dithmar, the predecessor of St. Adalbert, in the see of Prague, in the tenth century, exhibited terrible remorse on his death-bed: "Alas!" said he, "how changed am I from what I once was, and from what I could wish to be! Wretch that I am, I have lost my days! With an all-merciful God my other offences might be pardonable; but when I consider the crimes of the people committed to my charge—a people whose only guide is their pleasure, whose only law is their own inclination,—when I consider all this, then, indeed, I bewail my apathy; and I must bewail it through eternity! And now I am doomed to take the downward path to a region where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." "Dithmar," says the modern historian who cites these words, "was a man of strict morals; he had the learning and gravity becoming his station; and his only fault, the only cause of his self-condemnation, was want of zeal †."

Gerlac, a monk of Walchenrieth, explained his case in the following manner to Pope Innocent III.:—He said that when he used to celebrate mass he frequently, through negligence, pronounced the words of the canon in a disordered manner, on account of which he sometimes repeated twice those words and other things which the priest is bound to perform with the utmost care. Therefore, being moved with vehement grief, he cut off the end of one finger of his left hand. The Pope decided that he should abstain from celebrating mass, but that, after performing the penance enjoined, he might minister

* Id. lib. xiv. 159.

† Dunham, Hist. Ger. Emp. 11.

in all other offices *. Pope Innocent writes to the Bishop of Nevers in these terms:—"There has come into our presence a priest of Naizin, of the Cistercian order, saying, that while he was in a secular habit, some servants asked him anxiously where was a certain man whom they were seeking; and he, not knowing for what purpose they sought him, told them the place, to which they instantly hastened, but found him not; though afterwards they found him elsewhere, and put him to death. He, being wounded in conscience, went and disclosed what he had done to the Archbishop of Bourges, who prohibited him from saying mass for a time. And now, having entered the Cistercian order, he asks mercy from us. Therefore, since he is to be commended for asking advice from us, '*quia bonarum mentium est ibi culpam agnoscere ubi culpa non est*,' we write to your fraternity, desiring that you will inquire respecting this affair, and if it be so as he represents, that you grant him power to celebrate †."

Of this delicacy of conscience we find repeated mention even in profane histories. Conrad von Schwarzenberg, a crusader in 1203, is thus described:—"So great was his integrity, that whenever he recollected having uttered what was not true, in jest or through accident, he used to ask pardon in secret †."

But we need not proceed with such evidence. It is surely only a just conclusion that, when acts or omissions of this nature could so disturb the conscience—when the offence they gave it was so great that men were induced to practise to the very letter the precept of Christ, and cut off a limb, the moral sense must have been keenly susceptible—the horror excited by conviction of sin profound, and the desire of innocence truly fervent and sincere. Moreover purity of heart was not regarded in the middle ages as a privilege reserved only for a few, but it was known to belong essentially to every individual amongst that perfect people whom the Precursor came to prepare, as the Church observes in her anthem for the eve of St. John.

According to the remark of a great German writer,

* Epist. lib. ii. 194.

† Id. lib. ii. 227.

‡ Gunther, c. xi. ap. Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. 1.

who has studied the middle ages with all the characteristic learning and penetration of his countrymen, "the whole redemption of man and his real deliverance through Christ was known to be, not an external and mechanical operation, or a change from inveterate evil, as if by a magical word; but the real justification was the real sanctification—the divine act was to be united with the human act, whereby the man was to be internally changed, so as to be converted to a new life. Therefore," said they, "it is necessary to know God according to truth, and to live in him, which is to live in truth. And as it was necessary, as descendants of Adam, to have a scientific knowledge of sin and of its consequences, in order to feel the need of a Redeemer in all its force, so was it necessary to have a scientific knowledge of Christ, as without a true living union with Christ, man could not enter upon the spiritual life, there being no Christian life without Christian truth*." Sanctity, the most clear serenity of mind, was, in fact, the soul of all Catholic manners; it was the criterion by which all acts and operations were to be estimated; for, without purity of heart, it was known that nothing would avail to lead man to his true end. Consequently, the daily prayer of every Catholic was that of the priest in the first words of the holy mass, that God would judge him and distinguish his cause from the race that is not holy; and if the being associated with that race, in the eyes of God, were deemed synonymous with final destruction, we may be sure that a similitude with it in the eyes of man was not regarded as a happy presage. This was a practical truth of which no age of Christian society was left in ignorance. In the degenerate days of the old Pagan civilization we find it presented by St. Clement of Alexandria to the Christian converts, in curious contradistinction to the desires of prevailing vanity: "We that are in Christ Jesus," he says, "must indeed put off the old man, not the grey-headed, but that which is corrupted through the deceitfulness of desire; and we must be renewed, not by means of dyes and ointments, but in the spirit of our mind†." To the fathers of the desert the same instruction is pre-

* Staudenmaier, *Johan Scotus Erigena und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit*, i. 322.

† S. Clem. Alex. *Pædagogus*, lib. iii. c. 3.

sented by the great St. Anthony: "O my dear children in Jesus Christ!" cries the blessed father, "may you comprehend how much my love for you exceeds the affections of the flesh! It is he who makes me prostrate myself without ceasing at the feet of the holy altars, in order to obtain from my God that you may know him, and that you may perceive all the price of the grace which he has given to you, and that you may be aware of your danger, and that you may be enabled to offer yourselves to God as victims adorned with that purity without which no one can see God. My dear children, my soul is covered with confusion when I consider that we have the faculty of doing what the saints have done, and that we do not wish to elevate our minds, to seek the glory of heaven, nor to imitate the works of the saints, nor to walk in their footsteps, in order to be partakers with them of that eternal inheritance which is reserved for us by that God who is our common father, and to whom be glory and honour for ever and ever! Amen *."

We find the blessed abbot Esaia enforcing the necessity of conversion to purity of heart in these terms:—"As the iron left in the fire becomes like it, so that no one can touch it since it is fire, in like manner the soul, while it treats and speaks with God, becomes fire and burns his enemies. Let the soul, therefore, be renewed as iron; let it be rendered holy, so that it may never again be corrupted by anything of this world; but let it rest in its right nature, which it hath from God. For it is impossible that the soul should ever enter into the rest of the children of God, unless it should first bear his image; and the mark of his image is charity †."

Proceeding now to inquire into the method which was prescribed for attaining to the grace of this beatitude, we find the same unanimity, the same simplicity of instruction, through the long tract of ages that have heard the Church; and so efficacious were the means afforded by her for this end, that in addressing the philosophers of Florence, Savonarola drew an argument from their admirable success, appealing to experience for what he advanced to prove the truth and divinity of the Catholic religion ‡.

* S. Anthony Abb. Epist. V.

† B. Esaiaæ Abbat. Orat. 25. Bib. Pat. XII.

‡ Triumph. Crucis, lib. ii. 3.

Let us refer to the *Speculum Morale* that is added to the three Mirrors of Vincent of Beauvais, as it embraces all that had been taught by previous guides: "Purity of heart," saith this text, "no one can acquire by himself, or possess of himself; but God alone, who can create, can cleanse souls; and therefore Job asks, '*Quis potest facere mundum de immundo conceptum semine: nonne tu qui solus es?*'" For though the soul created by God is clean of itself, yet in the hour of its creation and infusion it is spotted, and, as it were, affected with leprosy, by the contact with the infected seed: therefore, the heart that desireth to be clean must repeat the words of the leper to Jesus Christ—*Domine, si vis, potes me mundare*: who will immediately answer, *Volo mundare* *." The soul is cleansed by the washing of baptism; but as this cannot be repeated, the boundless mercy of God hath instituted a new mode of purification, which is by penance, comprising the three parts of contrition, confession, and satisfaction; the last of which includes fasting, prayer, and alms: fasting, to which the apostle alludes—*Mortificate membra vestra*; prayer, of which we read, in allusion to the woman's purification, *Orabit pro ea sacerdos et sic mundabitur*; and if by another's prayer any one be cleansed, much more by his own; for in prayer the heart of man, directed and elevated to God, is cleansed; and alms, of which we read, *Date eleemosynam et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis*. "To preserve this purity," it continues, "many things should move us: first, the consideration of the price of our cleansing, which is the blood of Christ; secondly, the difficulty, nay, the impossibility of obtaining it by ourselves, since neither by ourselves nor for ourselves can we recover it, but God alone can render it to us; thirdly, a regard to our own soundness should move us, for in cleansing our heart we receive health; fourthly, a love of fear should move us, because the conscience can have no peace while it is defiled; but sins disturb peace: *non est pax impiis dicit dominus*: as the master of a family is not at peace while he knows that robbers or mortal enemies are in his house; fifthly, because in recovering cleanness of heart we recover divine

* Lib. i. pars IV. dist. 21.

love, for God can love no one unless the pure, as he is the lover of all purity *."

Again, we find passages of this kind occurring, which show with what attention and diligence the men of those ages studied to make clean their hearts. "Besides the evils of this life common to the good and evil, the just," says Vincent of Beauvais, "have certain peculiar labours of their own, with which they struggle against vices; for they labour lest a probable opinion should deceive them, lest a cunning word should mislead them, lest fear should prevent them from doing what they ought, lest cupidity should impel them to do what they ought not, lest the sun should set upon their anger, lest an indecorous or immoderate sadness should absorb them, lest ingratitude should render them slow to repay, lest a good conscience should be fatigued by malicious reports, lest rash suspicions should mislead them, lest a calumny against themselves should discourage them, lest sin should reign in their mortal bodies, lest the eye should follow concupiscence, lest in thought or view they should dwell in what ill delights, lest a wicked or indecorous word should be heard willingly, lest in their war of labours and perils they should hope for victory from their own strength, or, having obtained it, should ascribe it to themselves, and not to divine grace †."

All these teachers set out with expressing their profound sense of the heinousness and predominance of sin; and after having mourned in common "the servitude in which the half of human kind are mewed, victims of lust and hate, the slave of slaves, food to the hyæna lust, who among graves, over his loathed meal laughing in agony raves," Richard of St. Victor represents it thus:—"One thing the love of riches commands, and another the love of delights; one thing the heat of pleasure, another the search of cupidity. But when, in this manner, different vices hurry man away in different directions, or impel him to contrary things, they afflict him miserably, and suffer him not to rest day or night; and in a wondrous and pitiable manner they forestal the time of his damnation, whilst they rage with internal anxiety of mind or exterior affliction against one another; and unless super-

* Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Morale, lib. i. s. iv. dist. 21.

† Vinc. Bellov. Specul. Doctrinale, lib. i. c. 5.

nal clemency should look upon them, by temporal they pass to eternal torments *.” “Jesus, seeing the city, wept over it; and what the Lord, according to history, did once, the church,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “does daily by his elect: it weeps over the reprobate, who know not why they are to be pitied, because they rejoice in the worst things, who, if they had foreseen their damnation, would have wept over themselves with the tears of the elect †.”

Hear Alanus de Insulis :—“If such be the felicity of a pure conscience, what is the misery of a seared mind ! This is a book written with the hand of the devil, and defiled with hideous characters. The mind conscious of evil is there a chart displaying the enormity of sin; there, O miserable man ! thou mayest behold whatever thou hast written from thy earliest years, by which thou hast offended God, injured thy neighbour, undone thyself. O damned book ! in which are written not verses and hymns, but lamentations and woe. But now, O man ! efface by confession what thou hast written there by false speech ; efface by contrition what thou hast written by evil thoughts ; efface by satisfaction what thou hast written by wicked deeds ; efface the book of perverse conscience, lest reason should read therein that which might condemn thee, lest the devil should find therein that of which he might accuse thee, lest God should see therein that for which he might judge thee, that so thou mayest return to the spiritual joy of the mind, return to thyself, return to God ‡.”

St. Bernard speaks of the same operation in this manner :—“Jesus entered into a certain castle, saith the Gospel ; and what our Lord and Saviour vouchsafed to perform once, and in one place visibly, he still daily accomplishes in an invisible manner in the hearts of the elect. For what is this castle but the human heart, which, before our Lord comes to it, is surrounded with the ditch of cupidity, and encompassed with the wall of obstinacy, and raised up within like a Babylonian tower ? It has sensual pleasure and vanity for its provisions, by which it is nourished ; hardness of heart for its defence

* De Eruditione Homini Inter. i. lib. i. 33.

† Hugo S. Vict. Allegor. in Lucam, lib. iv. c. 30.

‡ Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 14.

and the arguments of carnal wisdom for its arms. But Christ entering this castle, it is overthrown, and in its place a new and beautiful edifice is raised ; for cupidity being removed, desire and the love of heaven, like a vast sea, surround it ; continence and patience form its walls of defence ; the structure rises upon the foundation of faith, and increases by love unto the charity of God, which is its keep, or highest tower. Old things are passed away, behold all things are made new. Thus solid are its walls, so that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor virtues, neither strength, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can prevail against it. The provisions of this blessed place are spiritual, the fulfilling of the divine will ; the arms are those which the apostle describes, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit. And now we knock at its gates, the gates of justice, that they may open to us, and that, entering, we may behold within the great works of the Lord, exquisite in all his counsels. For there he has built as if on mount Sion, that evangelical tower, through which the saints, with a humble heart, ascend to heaven, not by their own virtue, but by the assistance and grace of God. They proceed from virtue to virtue, until they see the God of gods in Sion, for this is the reward, and here is the end and fruit of our labour, namely, the vision of God. In Israel his name is great, and his dwelling in Sion. No more combats await us now. There brake he the arrows and the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle *."

St. Bonaventura describes this change of the right hand of the Most High in terms no less impressive. " First therefore," he says, " the understanding being purified by the laver of contrition, and inflamed and elevated by the fire of charity, with chaste meditations and devout thoughts it is to be shown how that blessed Son of God Christ Jesus is by a devout mind spiritually conceived. When a devout soul, either by hope of celestial reward, or by fear of eternal punishment, or by weariness of remaining longer in this valley of tears, being moved and stimulated by new inspirations, is visited, inflamed by holy affections, and agitated by celestial meditations, and at length casting away and despising its former defects and ancient desires, by a new prospect of living, is spi-

* S. Bern. in Assumpt. B. M. Serm. V.

ritually fulfilled by the Spirit of grace from the Father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift,—what else takes place, but that a virtue from on high descending, and there ensuing an overshadowing of heavenly refreshment, the celestial Father mitigates carnal concupiscence, comforts and assists the mental eyes to behold, and so, as it were, impregnates the soul, and makes it fruitful. After this most holy mystery, the countenance grows pale by true humility in conversation; through contempt for worldly things, the mind becomes indifferent to food and drink, and even sometimes begins to sicken in the casting off its own will. Now by degrees every thing external, and that is perceived externally, begins to be tedious and heavy, because it is perceived and heard internally. O happy conception, followed by such a contempt for the world, and such a desire of heavenly operations. Now the soul begins to fly from the society of those who are wise with worldly wisdom, and seeks familiarity with those who long for what is heavenly. Now the soul begins with Mary to serve Elizabeth, that is, those whom the divine grace inflames with love. And this is observed by many; for of necessity the more they abstract themselves from the world, the more they render themselves familiar and friendly to the good; and in proportion as they feel an aversion to the society of the wicked, they feel a delight in the conversation of the good and spiritual. Because, according to the blessed Gregory, he who adheres to a holy man, from the custom of beholding and hearing him, is excited to the love of truth, to fly the darkness of sin, and to burn with the desire of divine light*.”

Hugo of St. Victor also, in many places, treats on the purification of the heart with all the characteristic beauty of his style. “The spirit of the devil,” saith he, “worked the joy of iniquity, and the spirit of the world the joy of vanity, both evil; the one guilty, the other the occasion of guilt. Then came the Spirit of God, when the evil spirits were cast forth, and entered into the tabernacle of the heart, and worked its own joy—the joy of truth against the joy of sin—the joy of felicity against the joy of vanity: and the good joys expelled the evil joys; and when these had begun to fill the heart, man,

for the first time, discerned that the former were not true, since they were neither sufficient nor durable *.”

But it is Guibert de Nogent, applying to the process of mental renovation the terms of the book of Genesis respecting the creation of the world, whose eloquence and depth of thought, and minuteness of observation on this theme seem most remarkable ; and the passage is so interesting a specimen of the wisdom of the eleventh century, that I think no one can tire listening to it. “ In the beginning,” then, he proceeds, “ God created the heaven and the earth.” In the beginning of our conversion there are within ourselves two things contrary to each other—flesh and spirit, which once indeed, before we obeyed the serpent, were at concord, but which ever since the fall have been at variance. Therefore, when the chaos of vices was to be at an end, and a conversion to be wrought in the soul of man, God created the heaven and the earth, that is, he enabled the spirit to rise superior to the fleshly nature, and to maintain a sovereignty. We have, therefore, a heaven within us, by which we breathe after celestial things ; and we have, on the other hand, an earth, by which we seek the things that are common to us and brutes ; and, on our conversion, this heaven and this earth are first created, when the sense of these two becomes ordered according to justice in the mind. But the earth was without form and void : the carnal affections may truly be said to be void, because they have nothing in them solid, stable, or constant ; and that they are without form, is seen in the state of the interior man, when its thoughts and cares are far from God, meditating only useless or malicious things ; for what is man, I do not say without reason, but without God, who enlightens that reason, unless a brute ? For reason, if it be not joined with divine love, is rather a secular and diabolic cunning, than a prudence available to any good ; for nature by itself is never good, though inasmuch as it is from God nature is always good ; so that the devil, according to this, is good, though of himself most evil. Therefore the earth of itself is void, thinking nothing, producing nothing useful. Our authors say, that in the old translation was read, *not inanis et vacua*, but *invisibilis et incomposita*, which agrees better with morality ;

* Hugo S. Vict. Miscellan. lib. i. tit. 103. c. 14.

for the mind of man in the depth of sin, involved in a reprobate sense by the custom of sinning, is unable even to behold its own deformity; for such is a reprobate sense, that it blinds the mind of those who perish; so that they think it is they alone who are happy and worthy of honour from other men on account of their prosperity. Therefore, before God divided the heaven from the earth, the earth was invisible; for before he gave the grace of discretion, the mind could not see how sordid and execrable was the carnal affection; as when a live man and a dead man are placed together, the living can see the dead, but the dead in no wise can behold the living; so man, whose soul is living to God, can see how detestable are vices; but he who hath reached the bottom of evils, and hath despised and despaired, cannot perceive what is virtue, what is modesty, or any other grace. To them, therefore, the earth is invisible and incomposed: and darkness was on the face of the abyss. We may say, that the abyss is the human mind, the incomprehensible depth of which every man knows who hath experienced the inscrutable profundity, the instability and perturbation of his own heart; for even in the hearts of the good, when the flesh rises against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, the mind is in such a density of cogitation, that it can scarcely tell in what state it is, whether it will follow the impetus of the flesh, or that of the spirit. Whoever desires to know this more fully, should read the tract of St. Augustin, upon that verse, *Abyssus abyssum invocat*. Now in the hearts of the wicked, what do you think is the gulph, what the immensity of darkness, if such be the obscurity in the minds of the elect? If over the gourd of the people of God there spring up the thorns of secular cares and the weeds of carnal desire, how much more over the house of the joy of the exulting city? From this darkness there have arisen, therefore, invisibility and decomposition. And the Spirit of God moved upon the water; over the flood of many waters; that is, over the flood of many carnal desires the Spirit of God is borne. The wretched mind considers what misery it suffers; and as we read of the king of Babylon who killed his sons before the king of Juda, so while man considers how his good works are slain by the devil and destroyed, with what groans he beholds this cannot be described; because he had rather

die than behold this, and yet against the concupiscence and customs of vice, in his interior marrow, he is not able in any manner to resist. But God, who turns the impious, and they are no longer impious who calls the dead forth from their sepulchre, that they may live before him in justice, beholds the affliction of his people and descends, that is, he has compassion on their misery, and he says to them, *Fiat lux, et facta est lux*. What is this light, unless that first good which is given to those who are converted in the heart? and what is this first good but the fear of God, which is called the beginning of wisdom? for wisdom is called light in many places of Scripture. This fear is a light which dispels the darkness of obscure cogitation, and lights up the heart to the love of all virtue. Light being made, we read, And God saw that it was good; not that admiration could be in the Most High, by whom every thing admirable is created, but that he wished to show his creatures what they should admire. Therefore he made man see the light that it was good, made him see how good it was to emancipate the mind by the fear and love of God. And he divided the light from the darkness; that is, he gave a power of distinguishing between vice and virtue, which, with a wondrous art, divine piety insinuates into us; for in the beginning of our conversion God grants us a flood of tears, and a constancy in prayer, so that we seem to pass beyond the limits of human nature, and to become angelic by dint of contemplation. And when he acts thus with us for some time, we begin to presume, and then God resists our pride, and leads us, who had wandered in solitude, that is, without God, irrationally and bestially, to the way of seeking the city, of which he is the builder. So he withdraws again the sweetness of his grace, and permits us to hunger and thirst with an intense hunger and thirst, and to languish in evils, that he may convince us that, without him, we can do nothing: then our soul disdains all food of sacred reading, from which we might draw compunction, and so abominates it, that we seem to approach the gates of death, that is, the vices which lead to death; but he who tempts us, not that he should destroy, nor that he should know, but that he should make us know if we love him, sends his word into us, and heals and rescues us from destruction. Thus he makes us know that all good is from him, and

that we have evil from ourselves, and thus doth he divide the light from the darkness. And he called the light day, and the darkness night. He makes day in the soul of man by illuminating his reason; and, on the contrary, those who voluntarily sin he delivers up to the night of a reprobate sense; he calls this darkness night, inasmuch as he permits it to cover them; and the evening and the morning are one day; that is, because to those who love God, all things conspire to good, the evening, which is adversity, and the morning, which is prosperity, are one day, because the saints, whether in evils or in honours, are always the same, and there remains always in them the same divine splendour. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. There are twofold waters, there is divine wisdom, and there is secular wisdom, a wisdom from above, and an earthly wisdom, and unless reason be supported by that supernal wisdom, it becomes low cunning, noxious, and perverse; but when joined to the divine prudence, it becomes a firmament, supporting the superior waters by thirsting after them, and depressing the inferior under the dominion of reason. And the evening and the morning were the second day. Our beginnings, according to blessed Gregory, are mixed with evils; and although pious devotion in the morning shines upon us, yet the obscurity of our former, nay, of our natural conversation, soon involves us, and the mind grows dark, lest we should become proud of grace, God ordering it so for our good; but again it is irradiated by the ardour of compunction, lest it should sink into the depths of despair or crime. And thus alternately ascending to heaven, and descending to the abyss, it happens that by this vicissitude, ordained that we should be without vicissitude or even the fear of vicissitude, we come to the chaste life. And that is the second day. But here a serious question arises, why when on the preceding and following days it is said, and God saw that it was good, it is on this day omitted. For this we should consider what is said of the devil, in Job, *Habitent in tabernaculo ejus*, that is, the impious *Socii ejus, qui non est*. Who is this that is not, but the devil, who inasmuch as he fell from truth, already ceased to exist; for in what manner does he exist, who exists so unhappily, nay, who is eternally in death, without death? which we may feel also to

be our own case, who having fallen in our first parents, have passed from truth to vanity, and should truly have ceased to be, unless we had been restored by the grace of God. Hence, while labouring to taste the wisdom of our Creator, swallowing our spittle, we find ourselves opposed to ourselves; therefore, since the days are evil, and the world is placed in malice, and we must endure this conflict of inferior waters, in which is pride, against the superior, in which are humility and sanctity, as long as we are in this valley of tears, this lake of misery, that is, the present life, in the prophetic and apostolic language, this is not a life and a country, but a state of banishment and death. The apostle cries, *Miser ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?* and shall we think good these tortures which we bear, this battle of flesh against spirit, and of spirit against flesh? And even if we do any good, still, since we are always in the flood and danger of sin, as that dove of Noah, because we have no rest here. We must fly to Noah, that is, to Christ, who can alone give rest to our souls. Therefore we see how rightly this second day is not called good; because, after the first day spent in Paradise, we have been involved in these sorrows, which are so aptly signified in the ritual, which prescribes the tract to be sung after the Alleluja on holy Saturday, to teach us that we have incurred the labour of this life after the joy of Paradise. And God said, Let the waters be gathered together, which are under the heaven, into one place, and let the dry land appear. The waters which are under heaven are secular acts, which are concerned with forensic affairs, and with deceit, and are now to be subjected under the yoke of our intelligence. These are gathered into one place; for to God, who is our place, in whom we live and move, our solitudes, which before flowed wandering and unstable, are now compelled to minister. All our secular prudence is now employed in God's service; our genius is no longer exercised in deceiving the poor, but the gold and silver which have been brought from Egypt are spent in erecting a tabernacle of God in solitude, that is, in cultivating a devout mind far from the crowd of vices. And the dry land appeared; for the conscience, which was before fluid, like the earth of our heart, is now dried up from the flood of superfluous cogitations, and appears apt for bearing fruit. Let the earth then, he says, bring

forth the green herb, bearing seed. The heart of man emits now the first fruits of the seed of the word of God, which is the green herb; because, while every thing human is sterile, that lives ever fresh in the desires of eternal hope. The works, therefore, which are signified by the fruits and flowers follow, and the evening and the morning are the third day. What is this third day but science, which is the third step, after fear and piety, tending to wisdom? God also said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day and night. These two lights may be interpreted Christ and the church; Christ is proposed to the imitation of the strong, but the church, in her weaker members, has examples for the younger and less powerful: he gives the greater light to rule the day. We see that some of both sexes prefer the poverty of Christ to possessions, that they may think only of God; and that there are others, who can neither desert the world, nor give themselves wholly to God. Therefore to them he gives lesser lights, the stars to rule the night; for he gives to us, who do not presume to attain the highest things, neither Noah, that is, rulers; nor Daniel, that is, that we should imitate the life of celibacy, but the example of Job, doing good and studying mercy; that we, who cannot hope to come to the golden bed, that is, to the blessed rest by the purple ascent, that is, by martyrdom, may be able at least to attain to it by charity, on account of the daughters of Jerusalem. He, therefore, who does not dare to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, shining from the eternal mountains, may watch the mountains illuminated by it, and endeavour by that light to prove himself a member of the church. And the evening and the morning are the fourth day. And God saw that it was good; for what can be better than that we should attend to what we were and what we are? what more strengthens the mind than the contemplation of God and of his elect, learning to despise the prosperous things of this world, and not to fear its adversity? God also said, Let the waters produce creeping things, and fowls upon the earth. What do these signify but the subtle penetration of mind, which insinuates itself into the obscurities of the divine books; and what are the fowls upon the earth, but those who study wisdom, and in the excellence of contemplation, rise far above all earthly things, though still they

are under the firmament, that is, below the angelic virtue, for we can never attain to such a flight as theirs, who always behold the face of their Creator. God created also great monsters to move through the waters; and what are these but the illustrious doctors, the capacity of whose genius must awaken such admiration in every breast? What were Augustin, Jerome, Gregory, but monsters in their age, as in our own? Who can simply read the words of the glorious Origen, in 5000 books? Who can worthily comprehend the mysteries of Dionysius the Areopagite? All these stupendous creatures spring out of the waters; because, from the preaching of the sacred Scriptures, they conceive the effect of thinking well, and the power of acting well. And God blessed them, and said, increase and multiply; as if God, observing our intellectual labours, had said to us, increase in intelligence, and imbue one another in the science of sacred things. Investigate the depth of the waters, insinuate into the hollow and profound places beneath, and let the wing of speculation bear you aloft, eagle like, over the earth. And the evening and the morning are the fifth day, which answers to the gift of counsel which is required for discussing the mysteries of the sacred page. Finally, man is created, and then we read, that God saw all the things that he had made, and behold they were very good; that is, he made us see that they were good; for when we attain to the height of virtue, the love of God passes so into our very nature, that even if we might sin with impunity, the mind would never be bent from the tenor of its way. We see, therefore, and understand, what good things God hath done for us; and this brings us to the end of the sixth day. And God finished on the seventh day his work, and rested on it, which signifies, that not in this life, but in the next, the labours of the just can terminate; for as long as we are in this world, we neither can, nor ought to have, rest from doing good; but in the seventh age of the world we shall be released; for then will be the perfection of beatitude, and for those who rested from evil the Sabbath of eternal rest. In this life, therefore, it is the time for combatting and agony; there remains for us the everlasting crown."

So far Guibert de Nogent.

The supernatural purification and conversion of the

heart to God may be said to be the great leading phenomenon of a moral nature, presented in the history of the middle ages. It is not an exaggeration to affirm, that these sublime views of its regeneration, so clearly derived from experience, had the effect of transforming society into a new body, furnished with new organs, and breathing a new spirit, since the whole frame of nations was reorganised, to correspond with this new love of the human heart. If we desire to know their more specific counsels, we shall find every where passages that evince how great was the spiritual wisdom, and how profound the knowledge of the human heart, which belonged to men in ages of faith.

“ Let the heart which desireth to see God, study to be clean,” says Richard of St. Victor, “ that it may rise to the contemplation of divine things. O what earnestness, O what diligence, is necessary in that arduous study, before the mind can perfectly wipe off the ashes of earthly love, and consume them by the flame of true love; before it can refine the gold of its intelligence to that degree of purity, which is accordant with the dignity of such a work *.”

“ O,” cries St. Theresa, “ what subject for fear in this life, and what different kinds of ardour meet here? some consume the soul, and reduce it to ashes, and others purify it, and give it power to live and to possess God for eternity. O my God, grant that I may not depart from this life until I shall have placed all my desire in thee; until it will be impossible for me to love any thing else but thee alone. Grant, O my God, that this word love may never pass my lips excepting when pronounced for thee, since, thou alone excepted, every thing falls, every thing perishes, and all is nothing.”

“ In the love of perfect good,” says a monk, who wrote in the time of St. Bernard, “ is perfect happiness; the measure of our happiness will, therefore, be that of our love, since it is impossible to love God without being truly good, and to be good without being perfectly happy. Love, says the sage in the divine Canticles, ‘ is strong as death.’ He said truly: for in the same manner as death forcibly seizes upon the soul to separate it from the body; so does the love of God, with an invisible force,

* Richard. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. i. lib. iv. cap. 6.

withdraw man from the world, and extinguish in him all attachment to perishable things. The force of love is as great as that of death; and the victory which it obtains over vice is no less sensible to all the faculties of the soul, than is the hand of death to the body when it seizes upon all its parts."

"Our heart," says another spiritual guide, "is transformed into what it loves. I am in a manner all divine if I love God, and I become earth if I love the earth."

What, think you, was the purity of blessed Francis on that mountain of Alvernia, when he saw the seraph, and received the stigmas of Christ? But of this hereafter.

"In the first degree," saith Richard of St. Victor, "love is insuperable, in the second it is inseparable, in the third singular, in the fourth insatiable: insuperable, yielding to no other affection; inseparable, never departing from the memory; singular, admitting of no ally; insatiable, when nothing can satisfy it. Mark then here the excellence of love, which exceeds all other affections, the vehemence of love, which suffers not the mind to rest, its violence, which expels all other affections, its super-eminence, to which nothing can suffice. These four degrees of love are distinguished either as engaged on divine or on human objects, and in divine affections the greater they are the better they are. O how precious that insuperable love of God, that inseparable, singular, and insatiable love of God *."

Other axioms we find laid down to guide men to the true felicity. "The least imperfection," says blessed John of the Cross, "prevents the soul from ascending. As it matters not whether the thread which is attached to a bird be slight or strong, since either hinders it from flying away; so an imperfection, whether little or great, keeps down the soul. When a vessel is full of fluid, the least fissure is sufficient to occasion the gradual loss of every drop: and in like manner, when the soul is filled with the precious liquor of virtue and grace, if the opening caused by the slightest imperfection be not effectually stopped, this liquor escapes by little and little to the last drop †."

* Richard. S. Victor, *Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ charitatis*.

† *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, liv. i.

“Lava a malitia cor tuum Hierusalem, ut salva fiat *.” “The innocent in work,” says St. Bernardine of Sienna, “ascend the mountain of the Lord; which signifies purity of mind, and contemplation of celestial things †.” “There is no middle state for the heart to rest in,” say these high teachers; “necesse est enim animam ad carnalia et terrena dejici, quæ à spirituali vita degenerans ad cœlestia non aspirat ‡.” “Therefore,” says Gerson, “without the exercise of meditation, no one, excepting in the event of an especial miracle of God, can attain to the right observance of a Christian life.” St. Bernard remarks that, “nothing is felt so sweet in this life, nothing separates the mind so much from the love of the world, nothing strengthens the soul so effectually against temptations, nothing exalts a man so much, and assists him so effectually to every good work, as the grace of contemplation §.” And Louis of Blois says, “That all masters of the spiritual life teach, that the most useful of all exercises, and the sole necessary, is that of the remembrance of the humanity of Jesus Christ, and principally of his sacred passion ||.” Above all, they insist on the necessity of continual vigilance, remarking with St. Ambrose, that “the ordinary fraud of Satan is to endeavour to cast men down from their eminence, as he tempted our Lord to throw himself from the pinnacle of the temple: he tries,” saith he, “to precipitate them from their holy and venerable deeds to earthly and defiled, that he who stands in purity of mind on the summit of the temple, may cast himself down into the deep abyss and contagion of sin ¶.”

The admonitions of Richard of St. Victor on this head evince subtle observation of intellectual operations, and show with what care every insinuating evil was repelled. “Frequently,” he says, “when disturbed by evil thoughts, a man fancies that this arises not from his negligence, but in order to preserve him from pride; and thus he supposes it humility to be less watchful against

* Jer. 4.

† S. Bernardin. Sen. Sermo X.

‡ Petri Blesensis, Epist. cxi.

§ S. Bernardi de interiori Domo, cap. vii.

|| Lud. Blos. Guide Spirit. cap. iv.

¶ S. Amb. Serm. XXVI.

lust, and he knows not how detestable is the pride which in such defilement suggests that he is not a sinner, but another Paul, to whom the angel of Satan gives a thorn in the flesh, lest the multitude of virtues, or the greatness of revelations, should exalt him. Thus, in a piteous and wondrous manner, he grows proud, without ceasing to be luxurious, and he gives himself to luxury without ceasing to be proud. Who do you think can break such cedars? Truly he who breaketh the cedars of Libanus. This is the change of the right hand of the Most High, to bow down the swelling heart to the image of the humility of Christ *.”

Faith, as St. Augustine said, directed the intention, but power to vanquish diabolic obstacles would have failed without the intervention of celestial aid; therefore the universal belief of these ages was that of the Angelic Doctor, that “man in the state of this life is constituted as if on a journey to his country, on which he is beset with many perils, and therefore that as to men on dangerous roads guards are given, so to every man, as long as he is a wayfarer, the protection of an angel is granted, until he arrives at the end of this journey, when he will no longer have an angel guardian, but will either have in heaven an angel reigning along with him, or in hell a demon punishing him †.”

This belief was not without an influence on the general manners of men, and especially in regard to their mutual intercourse. It would appear from the ancient writings, that wherever those who were nourished with thoughts of piety met a man, they considered that they rather met his angel; and into whatever assembly of persons they came, there they acted under the impression that it was an assembly of angels ‡. Indeed one of the most remarkable features in the intellectual character of the middle ages, was the propensity to look always at the unearthly, the beautiful, the engaging, the innocent side of things. This breaks out most strikingly in their pictures, in their books, in their ceremonies, and in their social customs. What pure and amiable creatures are the

* Richardi S. Victoris Annot. in Psalm. xxviii.

† St. Thom. Sum. I. p. Q. cxiii. art. 4.

‡ Niremberg, Doct. Ascet. lib. iv. p. iv. cap. 34.

young of human kind in all their representations? youth's nature sanctified, is most lovely in their eyes; it is a beauty coveted of angels, an image stamp'd by the everlasting pleasure, to enhance the joy of heaven.

CHAPTER II.

THE extent to which purity of heart was cultivated during ages of faith, may be considered in relation to many subjects, and ascertained from many sources of information connected with history. It may be traced by observing its influence on the affections of men, on the manners of society, on literature and art, and on philosophy: in all which relations it led to such results that Savonarola, addressing the Italian philosophers of his time, appeals to their observation of the manifest effects daily appearing in the Catholic church to justify his concluding, from them, that the religion must be divine*.

A consideration of its influence on the affections alone would open a boundless field for psychological or moral researches. It would afford an opportunity for penetrating deeper into the mysterious side of the ancient life than we have hitherto done, and for noticing some of the most interesting phenomena presented in the history of mankind. But the whole subject is of such extent that we can only throw a very rapid glance at each branch. The reader, who is already familiarised with many characteristic features of the ancient Catholic civilization, will not be surprised when I cite among the first and most prominent of the facts connected with the desire of this sixth beatitude, the doctrinal and practical love of God, which, in those ages, formed a distinct element in the constitution of society, produced as great an effect upon the external aspect of the world, and gave rise to as many novelties and modifications in the whole order of human life, as result at present from the love of personal distinction under the mask of political and social

* Triumph. Crucis, lib. ii. c. 13.

forms, or from any other of the great leading principles to which the thoughts and actions of men are made subordinate.

Among the teachers who, in these subsequent times, have come forward intending to transmit or impart a knowledge of the principles of moral and theological truth, there is no want, it is true, of unity and conformity as far as regards the general expression of their obligation to fulfil the first and greatest of the commandments of the new law; but when they have done this and laid down the abstract principle, they may be said to stop as if the subject demanded no further investigation, or admitted of no ulterior developement. But it was not so in the middle ages, when the most important offices of human life, the institutions which presented themselves at every side, the whole frame and order of society, the half of literature, and all philosophy may truly be said to have turned on this hinge, and to have been identified with the doctrine and practice of the love of God, so that when it prevailed they flourished, and when it declined they fell to ruin and past away.

“The thoughts and affections of men,” says the ascetic, “are various and unstable, but all are vain and impure which are not of God. O human heart, cupidinous, anxious, and insatiable, how evil and bitter it is for thee to forsake thy God *!” “*Ut miser est homo qui amat!*” exclaims the slave in Plautus, regarding the condition of his master’s mind: but the poets of later and happier ages knew to say rather how wretched is the man who loves not as he ought. Purity of heart changed every thing. Let us hear the blessed John of the Cross describing this renovation. “Those who begin to love God may be compared to new wine, and those who have long loved him to old. As new wine ought to effervesce in the barrel, in order that it may discharge its froth and impurity, in like manner those who begin to love God ought, in their first fervour, to purify themselves from their vices and natural imperfections; and as this wine is neither pure, nor agreeable to the taste, nor conducive to health, in like manner these persons are not confirmed in the service of God, nor of a pure and refined taste in things spiritual, nor representatives

* Thom. Kemp. Hortulus Rosarum.

of holiness, because they are full of natural sentiments, sensual tastes, indiscretions, forgetfulness, inconstancy, and useless researches, and other defects which they ought to discharge as new wine casts up the lees. On the contrary those who have had long exercise in the love of God are like old wine, which is pure, wholesome, substantial, of good taste, without mixture of lees, without effervescence, without tendency to escape or to burst the bottle. Thus these ancient servants of God are purified from sensible fervour, from the transports of an ill regulated devotion, from too violent ardour, and other spiritual imperfections; but they are constant, faithful, masters of their senses, of their passions, of their desires, and of their actions."

The soul says of herself in the Canticle "I have lost the flock that I formerly followed." "The flock that the soul followed," he observes; and which it took care to feed before it had arrived at this eminent perfection, is nothing else but its natural and spiritual defects: the spirit was curious and flew after new acquirements: its will sought after spiritual delights and attached itself to little trifles, to self-esteem, to the point of honour, to a hundred other things which flatter nature, which have the air of the world, and which content the senses and the passions. The heart wished to taste in spiritual exercises, those interior consolations which are only good to hinder the imperfect from rising to perfection and to the divine union. The memory itself was embarrassed with a thousand useless things, which filled it with inquietude and difficulties, while it was endeavouring to retain them all and to propose them to the soul for its service. But after all they only hindered it from effecting a union with its Creator. That is the reason why she disengages herself from them by the force of love, and says with joy, "I have lost the flock that I formerly followed." "All her exercise is in loving." "Love alone governs her; she does and suffers all things by love: her contemplations and her commerce with God; all her spiritual exercises and all her corporal works, all that is comprised in the functions of body and of soul, have no other principle or end but love. O happy state! O happy life! O happy soul which is arrived at the condition of feeling no more either joy or sadness, bitterness

or sweetness, good or evil, excepting for, and by, and in the love of God."

The scholastic philosopher teaches the necessity and method of attaining to this state. "Every rational creature," saith St. Anselm, "exists for this end, that, as by reason of discretion it may judge what is more or less good or not good, so, more or less, it may love that or abhor it; for nothing is more proper than that a reasonable creature should be made for this, to love the highest essence above all good as it is the highest good. So that it should love nothing but that or on account of that; because that is good of itself, and nothing else is good unless by that. But it cannot love that unless it study to remember, and to understand it clearly; therefore the rational creature ought to direct all its will and power to recollect and understand and love the chief good *.

Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect. "Many things," saith he, "we love from the choice of deliberation which we do not affect with the appetite of desire. In carnal desires, love from the mind often follows love from the heart; but in spirituals, we always love first from deliberation, and afterwards from affection †." Idiotæ makes the same remark: "Love springs from the intelligence and falls into the heart by faith. Love enters the mind of men through the ears. Love springs from good discourse and from good observance ‡." Hence the unwearied efforts of the teachers of the middle age to develope all the reasons which should convince the understanding of men that they ought to love God. St. Bonaventura furnishes another example, for he too observes, "that it is always necessary to think previously before one can be moved with love towards God," and cites St. Augustin, saying, "It is necessary at first by reasoning or thinking, intellectually to know before any thing can be loved with affection. Cogitation therefore necessarily precedes the affection of love §." Then they proceed to observe that the immense goodness of God should impel men to love him. "Think of whatever

* Monologium, cap. 66.

† Rich. S. Victoris de gradibus violentæ Charit.

‡ Idiotæ Contemplat. c. ii.

§ S. Bonav. Mystica Theologia, ad fin.

you will," says St. Bonaventura, "and thence you will have no little motive for loving your Creator *." "Consider," says Richard of St. Victor, "what is that goodness, to which whatever is pleasing is good because it is pleasing to it, and to which whatever is displeasing is evil because it is displeasing to it †." "This master," saith St. Clemens Alexandrinus, "is of all others the most loving, for he hateth nothing, and wisheth to destroy nothing. He is the cause of every thing existing, and he hateth nothing that exists. If he hateth nothing that he hath made, it remains that he loveth every thing, and above all man, the fairest of his works. Man himself this Father styles *κάλλιστον καὶ φιλόθεον ζῶν* ‡." In fact man is a lover of God even when he knows it not. St. Augustin says, "He who loveth his neighbour must in consequence especially love that love itself." On which passage Duns Scotus commenting, adds, "but love is God. It remains to conclude that he loves God §." "Return four kinds of love to God," say the ancient authors, "from thy whole heart for thy corporal being, with all thy soul for thy vital being, with all thy strength for thy sensitive being, with all thy mind for thy angelical and spiritual being, and at last with all together for all together, that is for thyself who art all."

The scholastics caution men from having their affections confined to second causes. Hugo of St. Victor makes the observation that "Fathers transmit not souls to their children. It is God," he says, "who creates each soul separately, by an immediate exercise of his power:" and he cites the words of the Psalm, "*qui finxit sigillatim corda eorum* ||." Yet they show likewise that the perfect love God, not because he is good to them, but because he is good, as we naturally love whatever is beautiful, without any view to our own utility: which doctrine of the disinterested spirit of piety may be seen, admirably laid down, in the work entitled *Theologia Germanica*.

"God is not loved without reward," says St. Bernard,

* Stimul. Divin. Amoris, pars ii. cap. 2.

† Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplat. I. iv. 17.

‡ S. Clem. Alex. Pædagog. lib. i. c. 8.

§ Duns Scot. in lib. i. Sent. Dist. xvii. Q. 1.

|| Ps. xxxii. Summæ Sentent. tract. III. c. 3.

“although he is loved without regard to the reward*.” “The measure of loving God,” he says elsewhere, “is to love him without measure.” To this fervent love, every one, who had a wish to profess in sincerity the Catholic religion, continually aspired during ages of faith.

“As long as man is in a state of grace,” said Theologians, “he always loves God habitually.” But how great was the fervour even of this habitual love in the blessed clean of heart! Richard of St. Victor says it is inconceivable. “Who,” he exclaims, “hath strength to conceive that mutual love of the Saviour and the saved! How he loveth them whom he has redeemed with such a precious price, and how they rejoice in him, and rest in his love, by whom they know that they have been redeemed!†” Stephana Quinzani heard a voice in her heart exclaiming, Love, love, love! and became all seraphic at the sound‡. The same mystic call to Ursula Benincasa was not a mere subjective fancy, for it was heard not by herself alone but by others§.

“O Jesu Christ,” cries John de Avilla, “how strong is thy love, and how it converts all things to good! He that is nourished with the noble love of our Saviour will never feel hunger nor poverty, and will put all things temporal under his feet, for, possessing God by love, he will want nothing||.”

How a retrospective glance at the historical facts, contained in the former volumes, would verify the truth of such observations; for from what other principle sprung all those varied fruits of heroism, justice, and sanctity, which have been witnessed but the love of Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep his great command? If the true marks of love for God be, as St. Theresa says, “the prayers which are offered up with ardour for what regards the glory of his Son and the augmentation of the Catholic faith,” we need only refer to the fifth book for abundant and glorious illustration. Love itself being

* S. Bern. lib. de dilig. Deo.

† Rich. S. Vict. in Cantica Canticorum, c. 10.

‡ Ephem. Domin. I. 13.

§ Histor. Cleric. Regul. p. ii. ix. Goerres Die Christliche Mystic. ii. 150.

|| Epist. xxi.

thus the object of preference habitual or actual, it followed that all the affections and springs of human action were, more or less, directed toward this common centre, for it was clearly not alone the schoolmen and mystic philosophers, but men of every condition, in ages of faith, who might have used the words of St. Hilary which St. Thomas cites as expressing his own conviction, "I am conscious that I owe to God this principal office of my life, that all my speech and all my senses should proclaim him †." An observation of the effects resulting leads us naturally to the second source of evidence which has been pointed out, consisting in those traits of manners which revealed the existence amongst men of the clean of heart. Here we stand upon a mountain which commands an immense prospect, for all that we have hitherto surveyed, and all that awaits our observation in the subsequent pages of this history can be seen from this point stretched out before us. It is clear that every grace which belonged to the children of beatitude was intimately associated with this element, we must therefore adopt arbitrary limits, and be content with a rapid glance at some of the most prominent facts which bear testimony to the presence of the pure.

Among these we may notice the influence of the clergy, the influence of the church, and, in general of the theological element in the constitution of society: for in purity of heart and mystic illumination lay the secret of this great moral power. We are told that men, in those ages, were the slaves of priests; but it is strange that those who advance this objection should not observe that it may be turned against themselves; for what does this imply but that they chose to be influenced by those who possessed, in the highest degree, sanctity and wisdom? What philosopher would attempt to found a charge against Alcibiades, upon his own testimony, that he is enslaved by Socrates, saying, *καταδεδουλωμένος τε ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὥς οὐδεὶς ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἄλλου* *.

The clean of heart, in ages of faith, were the church's slaves! Well, admitting for a moment such an application of the term, what, let us ask, was the consequence of abolishing this tyranny? Whether increase of purity

† Con. Gentes, c. 2.

* Plato, Conviv. 35.

followed the progress of the self-styled emancipators of the human mind, is a question, reader, that no one possessed of any learning can be at a loss to answer. If any should now pretend to regard the solution as difficult, they may be referred to the testimony of those liberators themselves, who acknowledged that their success had not multiplied the clean of heart. Luther's profound discouragement, towards the end of his career, arose from this observation. "If I had known at first," said he, "that men were so much the enemies of the word of God, I should certainly have remained silent and tranquil. I imagined that they only sinned through ignorance. The world is like a drunken peasant: if you put it in the saddle right on one side, it falls down on the other. There is no helping it, do what one will. The world chooses to belong to Satan. God forbid the world should last fifty years longer! Many sects will arise which are now hidden in the hearts of men. Let the Lord cut matters short with the last judgment, for there is no amelioration to expect. The time is come that was predicted, when men would live without God, each according to his fantasy. Our people, now that they are free from the laws of the Pope, wish to be free also from the laws of God." Finally, he took such a disgust for Wittemberg that he could no longer endure to remain there. He wrote from Leipzig to his wife, in 1545, in these terms:—"I wish to arrange affairs so as to have no more need of returning to Wittemberg: my heart has grown cold for that city; I desire to inhabit it no longer. Wittemberg has become a real Sodom, and I will never return to it again; I would rather pass my life on the roads, begging my bread, than torment my poor last days by the view of the scandals of Wittemberg, where all my pains have been in vain*." Such was the result of breaking up the ancient spiritual order of faith, of delivering the Word to the disputation of the curious, and directing the energies of ungovernable men to attack the only authority which could restrain the passions, and subject the affections of the human heart to the sources of purity.

In order next to this great fact of the predominance of religious power, may be noted, that extraordinary solidity and security of the ancient Christian states,

* Michelet, *Mém. de Luther*, tome iii.

which led to such important practical results in favour of intellectual and moral good. Do you seek for the immediate cause of this phenomenon?—You will find it in the multitude of the clean of heart; for, as one who knew them says, “He who hath a clear conscience will be easily contented and kept in peace;” you will find it in the character of their political wisdom, which cannot be more faithfully summed up than in these words of their choice director:—“Study only to please God, and be subject to every human creature for God’s sake. Obey superiors, assist inferiors, show reverence to all, and piously endure the manners of the weak and perverse. If you wish to be saved, if you wish to be happy, follow the humility of Christ, and despise yourself; do not wish to be on the tongues of men who deceive their silly lover by vain praises and temporal glory. Look at your own heart, and see to how many passions it is obnoxious, and you will never boast of yourself or despise others, however weak or poor they may be. Let vain glory be far from you, and the desire of human praise on account of some science or art acquired. Perish the false imagination of sanctity! Rejoice with dove-like simplicity, and teach others more by example than by subtle words*.”

Lastly, you will find it in the submission of the clean of heart to the authority of God, speaking by the Church; for as the Church sings in her hymn of the Epiphany, alluding to the fears of cruel Herod,—

“Non eripit mortalia
Qui regna dat cœlestia.”

Luther, in his “Sincere Exhortation to all Christians, to warn them from the spirit of Rebellion,” in 1524, teaches them that there must be a spiritual but not a temporal insurrection. His philosophic penetration may be judged of by the result which Europe is still beholding, without any prospect of the spectacle being soon at an end. Observe, this solid and secure permanence of states during ages of faith is a fact which cannot be disputed. Luther himself recognized it in bitterness of spirit, when he saw the change around him. “Germany,” said he, “has been, and it will never again be what it has been.”

* Thom. à Kempis, Sermonum II. pars 7.

“Self-security and the invisible force formed the base of the spiritual or religious state,” as Novalis observes, “and consequently the civil society which was inseparably connected with it could not but participate in the same advantages.”

Now, if you will hear the thoughtful poet of a less happy age, this fact alone, when joined with that of their intellectual activity, would warrant your concluding that these must have been, in a most eminent degree, ages of the clean of heart; for, saith he in solemn verse, alluding to the transitory shadows of government that pass around him,—

“ The irreversible decree stands sure,
Where men are selfish, covetous of gain,
Heady and fierce, unholy and impure,
Their toil is lost, and fruitless all their pain,
They cannot build a work which shall endure *.”

The complaint of the slave Xanthias, in Aristophanes, *περὶ ἐμοῦ δ’ οὐδεὶς λόγος*—no one talks of me, is then the expression of all servile hearts; and social convulsions, with all their dismal consequences to the people, follow.

The schoolmen saw that such effects were inevitable, if the human race were at any time to adopt for guide reason, without grace—intelligence, without the light of a heart supernaturally cleansed; and philosophers in our age have begun to speak like them. Suppose a vast intelligence, void of morality: “You have,” continues one of these, “the genius of evil upon earth. Science, in the hand of this malevolent being, is only an instrument of egotism, and, consequently, of disorder and destruction; for he will make it serve, not to the glory of God and the happiness of humanity, but to the satisfaction of his own appetites, to the caprices of his imagination; and if such a being were to have duration and power, he would finish by absorbing the whole creation in his devouring personality.”

Again, another important fact which indicates the purity of the hearts of men during those ages, was that heroic contempt for personal convenience which we before observed as constituting a characteristic feature of their justice. “By nature,” says St. Clement of Alexan-

dria, "man is a lofty animal and proud, and desirous of all good. Nothing is so contrary to the Divine nature as the love of pleasure, which makes men resemble swine*." This contempt of pleasure, which appears in the worst of men when their temporal interest forbids them to indulge in it, was then conspicuous in all ranks of society, whenever it was a question of the soul or of religion. St. Chrysostom even reproached himself with his having taken thought respecting what was necessary for him in the desert, when recollecting the example of those who are the slaves of the world, whom a vile ambition leads to load themselves with great employments, and to take part in the administration of public affairs. "For they," said he, "sacrifice without the least repugnance all the commodities which appear of so great a price to us, in order that they may amass perishable riches. For this end neither labours, nor dangers, nor ignominy, nor long voyages, nor a protracted residence in a foreign land, nor any kind of anxiety, nor the rigour of the seasons, nor the chance of failing in their object, nor the fear of sudden death, for an instant occupy their attention†."

"Why are all those lost who are lost in the world," exclaims St. Theresa, "if it be not on account of their seeking their comfort and their repose?" It was in keeping subordinate to all considerations of a spiritual nature what the genius of modern civilization requires men to study and cultivate with a kind of religious worship, that the clean of heart, in ages of faith, found their satisfaction; they were ever ready to sacrifice what was even most closely associated with spirit, if the interests of a more important intellectual object required it. Witness the words of St. Hilary, advising the Catholics of Milan to abandon their churches and assemble in the woods and caverns, rather than remain when Auxentius the Arian bishop usurped that see:—"Of one thing I bid you beware—Antichrist. The love of walls ill possesses you; ill do you venerate the church of God in roofs and edifices. Male enim vos parietum amor capit: male ecclesiam Dei in tectis ædificiisque veneramini. Ill do you bear under these the name of peace. Safer to me are the mountains, the woods, lakes, prisons, and deep,

* S. Clem. Alex. Pædagog. lib. iii. c. 7.

† On Compunction, lib. i. cap. 6.

caverns; for in these the prophets, either remaining or thrown, prophesied with the Spirit of God." Memorable words! How well might they be addressed to many who now cling to chief seats and to cathedrals which their fathers impiously seized, though by such advice there would be little hope of aught exciting but a smile! Yet, had occasion been presented in the middle ages, what multitudes would have obeyed the summons with alacrity! The views of men of pure hearts, who saw God, were not to be confined by walls and edifices, however sublime as works of art, any more than their understandings could have been imposed on by words not identical with faith, however skilfully arranged to sound like it.

Did our limits permit such a delay, we might take a glance here even at the amusements and pleasures of society in ages of faith, and be able to trace the influence of pure hearts, in the very choice which was made of objects to afford them. Assuredly great is the contrast between the beautiful solemnities of a Catholic population, which draw all Genoa to the church of a mountain village, and the ignoble festivals of a city professing to have reformed religion, which hires its theatres for a dinner. But observation of evidence more grave requires us to proceed. The sanctification of all professions and forms of life by the ruling motive, and their direction to a supernatural end, clearly and steadily pursued, without interruption or obscurity arising from any defilement of the heart, is a fact which deserves attention, perhaps more than any other as yet noticed. How many duties were then uppermost in minds which now can think only upon rights! What a mysterious charm was attached to each office, in discharge of which all sinister view was laid aside! Let us consider how many forms of beauteous and innocent life existed in the middle ages under the influence of Catholicism. There was then the castle life, often disordered and turbulent it is true, but as often half sacerdotal, with its evening choir and all its exquisite provisions, holy and full of honour, for directing well the young affections. By its side was the monastic life, with its solemn purifications and delicious peace, which made St. Bernard say that the crowds which followed it seemed to him more angels than men, and that so constantly was their intention directed according to

God's heart, that he firmly believed, without mentioning things of greater merit, that in every step which they made, and in every movement of their hands, they added somewhat to the crown prepared for them in the eternal world *. There was, again, the pilgrim life, with its purifying renouncements, and yet, on the other hand, its sweet and sanctifying recollections of holy men and holy places; there was the knightly life, with its chivalrous allegiance to heaven, its high enjoyment of all the reverential sentiments of our nature, and all its gentle associations of forest glades and crested towers, with the defence of the weak and the noble love of whatever is good and honourable. Nor let us forget the peasant life, with its delicious initiation into all the ineffable consolations and splendours of the saints, having in each rural church and monastery a paradise ever open to it, yielding not alone a peace and felicity, but even a form of external beauty surpassing whatever could be imagined in the palaces of kings,—all were conditions sanctified and pure, yielding a vision of God to men of good will, peace to the heart, truth to the intelligence; so that, wherever the recognized type of each was fulfilled, one might truly say with poets,—

“ The deadly germs of languor and disease
Died in the human frame, and purity
Blest with all gifts her earthly worshippers.
How vigorous is there the form of age!
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, nor care
Have stamp'd the seal of grey deformity.
How lovely the intrepid front of youth!
With meek-eyed courage, deck'd with freshest grace—
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a name,
And elevated will, that journey'd on
Through life's phantasmal scene in fearlessness !”

This Catholic view of the constitution of human life suggested to blessed Gregory the plan of his septiform litany; for he divided all the people of the city into seven choirs, comprising in separate divisions the monks, the nuns, the children, the laymen, the widows, and the married women †. Duties were multiplied with the

* Epist. cccxli.

† Hist. Miscell. Addit. Script. Rer. Italic. tom. i.

varieties of offices arising out of the order of society, so that nothing could be more different than the type of a pure and happy state, in ages of faith, and that which the modern views of civilization would substitute in its place; for they would have only the one prosaic unspiritual life of passions misapplied and energies squandered upon ends that satisfy not—life monotonous and toilsome—life which sin, which avarice, not God, has made—recalling the unhappy days of ancient Rome, when there was only the rhetorician's life, the sophist's life, the tribune or the patrician life; none of which states to the intelligence could have ever yielded one ray of hope to gild the sad horizon of this brief existence, or to console in misery the poor diseased heart. The angel of the school saw nothing in the difference of rank and degrees established around him in the world but what he thought might have been fitting human existence before the fall. "In the state of innocence," saith he, "there was disparity from difference of sex, age, disposition, and knowledge; for man worked not by necessity, but by free-will, which implies that man may more or less apply his mind to do any thing or acquire any knowledge. Therefore some make greater proficiency in justice and wisdom than others. There was disparity, also, of bodily strength or constitution. Now it is true that equality is a cause of rendering mutual love equal; yet nevertheless amongst unequals there might be greater love than amongst equals, for a father loves his child more than a brother loves a brother. Disparity may arise from the part of God, that the beauty of order may be developed amongst men. It was not contrary to the dignity of the state of innocence that man should rule over man, since even amongst angels there are dominations; the dominion in the state of innocence would have been that by which a free man is directed towards his own good; and this dominion is good, because man is naturally a social animal; and the social life of man could not exist unless some one should preside to provide for the common welfare *.

How strange to many ears at present must be this proposition of St. Thomas: "*Nec inæqualitas hominum excluditur per innocentie statum.*" Who would now dare to utter it before a large assembly? It is that we

* P. i. Q. xcvi. art. 4.

have lost the idea of the possibility of such a combination; it is that we have lost the idea of the state of the rich being sanctified, of the state of rule and authority sanctified, of the state of knowledge and intellectual superiority sanctified. How few men are there who can now represent any fair and glorious ideal!—how few now living associated, in the minds of their contemporaries, with any complete, beautiful, or inspiring image of moral grandeur or loveliness! There are the personages of Greece and Rome, and of our modern novels perhaps, at every step; but those of holy or knightly books, on which our fathers fed their lofty hearts, may be sought in vain.

This supernatural direction of mind, by which the intention was fixed upon fulfilling the highest duty, was shown by the moralists of the ages of faith to be the only basis on which any structure of virtue could rise with security; and their remarks in verification are highly interesting. “I have seen,” says St. John Climacus, “many and various germs of virtues planted by those who live in the world, watered with vain glory as if from the pollution of a sewer, dug round by ostentation, and manured with human praise, which, when they were afterwards transferred to the desert, where they were no longer seen by men of the world nor nourished with the miry waters of vain glory, have all suddenly dried up and withered away*.”

With such morality the blessed clean of heart were not content. “Where is faith?” exclaims St. Jerome—“where is purity of soul?—where is the prayer of Jonas in the sea, and of the children in the furnace, and of Daniel among the lions, and of the thief upon the cross? Let every one examine his own heart, and he will perceive how rare it is to find a faithful soul which does nothing for glory or to please men. For he who fasts does not immediately fast to God; nor does he who stretches out his hand to the poor immediately lend to God. Vices are neighbours to virtues. It is difficult to be content with the judgment of God alone†.” Difficult, no doubt, it was, in all ages, to possess such contentment; nevertheless we have only to consult the historical

* Scala Paradisi, grad. ii.

† S. Hieron. advers. Luciferianos.

monuments which bear testimony to the manners of that middle period, to behold the difficulty overcome; for it is certainly no misrepresentation to affirm that men in those times had merely to look around them to witness indisputable evidence of faith and purity of soul—to see crowds who not alone abstained from wrong like virtuous Gentiles, loving truth and equity, and hating and resisting, as far as the Christian law permits, all things opposed to them with the steadiness of instinct, but who attained to an angelic life through the love of God. The exception would not have been a man like Aristides, who was remarkable as being the only one amongst his contemporaries that was acknowledged to be above calumny; but however numerous might be the unhappy who fell from the height of their vocation, either in ecclesiastical or civil life, it was such persons in reality who formed the phenomenon that was pointed out as strange. Without being sceptical to a degree that would destroy the foundation of all knowledge, we cannot avoid arriving at this conclusion, that it was the spirit of multitudes in those ages to do nothing for glory or to win human praise—to be directed in all actions by the immediate sense of a religious duty, and to be content with the judgment of God alone. There was a soul of self-devotion in the whole order of the ancient Catholic state, pervading all its members, which imparted to men the faculty of rendering every path of life a way to heaven. Hear how a prince of Italy speaks, and you may learn from his words what was purity of heart in relation to a crown:—"My conscience is witness," says John Francis Picus, of Mirandula, "that I do not covet sovereign power, nor am I prompted by the desire of riches; for I prefer a life of peaceful meditation and tranquil study to turbulent riches: and I would rather be governed than govern; but I perceive that unless there be one prince, our affairs will go on ill, and that we shall be devoured by continual seditions. Now that I say this sincerely may be easily credited; for what more horrible to a composed mind than popular commotions and the discussion of civil controversies?—what more abhorrent from the life of study and philosophy, which I love, than to fear continually hostile invasions, domestic treachery, enemies without, poison within? Nevertheless, since by

my birth and by the laws I seem destined to fulfil the office of ruler, I will endure these things to the best of my power, and accommodate myself to them *."

"King Ferdinand, covered with years and glory," says Roderick of Toledo, "was forewarned of his death in a vision, and soon after visited with the first symptoms of his malady. He caused himself to be carried, therefore, to the city of Leon, where he first went to the cathedral, and prostrated himself before the altars, praying that God would grant him a happy passage to immortal bliss. It being the night of our Lord's nativity, the king, though sick, assisted at matins with the clergy. The next day, the mass of Toledo, the Mozarabic, was solemnly celebrated in his presence, when he received the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood. On the next day, having called the bishops, abbots, and religious men, he caused himself to be carried into the church, and there, with his diadem on his head and clothed in the royal robes before the sarcophagus of St. Isidore, he cried out to the Lord with a clear voice, saying, 'Tua est potentia, tuum est regnum, Domine, tu es super omnes reges, tuo imperio omnia sunt subjecta: quod te donante accepi, restituo tibi regnum, tantum animam meam in æterna luce jubeas collocari.' So saying, laying aside his royal garments, he begged for mercy, and received from the bishops penitence and the grace of last unction. Clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes, he passed two days in penitence and tears. On the third, at the hour of sext, it being the feast of St. John the Evangelist, full of days, he rendered up his spirit to God, and was buried in the same church of St. Isidore †." Thus could a king die.

If we were desired to point out men in regal authority resembling in their views and policy Hippias, after the detection of the conspiracy against him, who regarded all his subjects as his secret enemies, and who, instead of attempting to provide for their future welfare, aimed only at plundering them—who, being conscious of deserving their hatred, and feeling in proportion less secure from its effects, considered Attica as a domain held by a precarious tenure, and thought only of profiting as much as possible by his uncertain possession, taking care to place

* Joan. F. Pic. Mirand. Epist. lib. i.

† Moderici Toletani de Rebus Hispaniæ, lib. vi. c. 14.

beyond their reach the funds which he raised by extraordinary imposts and artifices of all kinds,—it would not, assuredly, be to the annals of the middle ages that one would first and most naturally look. To protect religion, and to multiply the institutions which it formed for the diffusion of virtue and happiness among the people, was then the recognized duty of all rulers; and it must never be forgotten what numbers of them discharged it with fidelity. The epitaph on Louis VII. of France gave glorious testimony of his having merited a place amongst them:—

“ *Servula tristis, inops, aliquo sub rege: sub isto
Floruit ecclesia, libera, læta, potens* *.”

The situations that might be supposed, at first, least reconcileable with the mystic sanctity of the clean of heart would be found, upon a second view, to have formed no exception to what was then the general law of all social positions. Witness, for example, the profession of arms:—“Chivalry,” says a modern French writer, “is a real event of history—a great institution of the middle ages; its image is reflected in the manners and details given by the romances of chivalry, which in this respect may be called a chronicle of the middle ages, no less true than even the chronicle of St. Denis †.” Many other authors of modern times have attempted to throw discredit upon the representation of honour and purity which belonged to the ancient military character in ages of faith, when Sir Percival was a model for the imitation of its youth; and even this writer, in the very same work, is so inconsistent as to ask, “What is the truth on which has been embroidered this smiling fiction of chivalry?” They are perhaps misled by an exclusive attention to the characters and manners around them, and a notion that they must always have been the same; but they should consider whether there be not reason to fear lest it should be only what was merely animal in the ancient chivalry—courage, egotism, ferocity, the high excitement and the battle-cry, which had survived in the profession—while what was divine, and spiritual, and mystic in its constitution has passed away, including piety, grace, the sanc-

* Duchesne, tom. iv.

† Villemain, *Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age*, 260.

tifying direction of the thoughts to some just and holy end—the mind, in short, that would suggest the memorable reply, “*Milites sumus, imperator, tui, sed tamen servi Dei : tibi militiam debemus, illi innocentiam.*”

It was this divine and spiritual guidance of the intention which, under the sanction of Christ, as conveyed in his answer to the soldiers, was supposed in the middle ages to render the profession of arms reconcileable with the beatitude of the clean of heart. “The duty of a knight,” King Alfred used to say, “consists in providing that the church should have peace, and that the labourers should be undisturbed.” No adverse fortune could disturb the serene felicity of such men—like the strong oak, which, when the Alpine blasts contend, and the leaves and branches are scattered on the ground, still adheres to the rock, and with its deep roots cleaves to the earth :—

“ *Haud secus assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros
Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas :
Mens immota manet, lacrymæ volvuntur inanes **.”

Witness Guido de Montigny, who bore the standard of Philip Augustus at the battle of Bovines :—

“ ——— qui mente immobilis ut mons
Vexillum regale die portavit in illo ;”

and, under more trying circumstances, witness the moral courage of Lorenzo Priuli, elected doge of Venice at a moment when the triple scourge of war, pestilence, and famine overwhelmed his country, and who on the day of his inauguration commenced his address to the people with these words :—“ *Etiam si ambulavero in medio umbræ mortis, non timebo mala, quoniam tu mecum es †.*”

Abbon, the monk, in his poem on the siege of Paris, thus relates the death of one of its defenders :—

“ Happy Robert, struck by an arrow, breathed his last !”

“ *Robbertus felix jaculo spiravit ibidem ‡.*”

* IV. 445.

† *Fasti Ducales*, 210. Venice, 1696, ap. Rio.

‡ *Lib. i.*

“After all,” says a modern French author, “the Christian hero is an admirable character. The people whom he defends regard him as their father; he protects the labourer and the harvest; he prevents injustice; he is an angel of war whom God sends to mitigate that scourge; cities open their gates at the mere rumour of his justice; ramparts fall down before his virtues; he joins to the warrior’s courage the charity of the Gospel; his conversation moves and instructs; his words have the grace of a perfect simplicity; one is astonished to find so much sweetness in a man who lives in the midst of perils, as the honey is concealed under the bark of the oak which has braved the storm.” Would you trace the operation of the purifying spirit in the great events which constituted a new military epoch in the history of the world, and observe the thoughts which moved the Pilgrim and the red-cross Knight, to undertake the deliverance of the Holy Land? Hear a contemporary author whose sincerity is beyond suspicion. “We speak,” says Guibert de Nogent, “of the new and incomparable expedition of Jerusalem. To undertake this, not the ambition of empty fame, not the love of riches, nor the desire of extending territories, have excited our people; not even, what would be excusable, the defence of liberty or of the public good, has been the motive, but their sole desire and object were to defend the holy church, endangered by the incursions of the barbarous nations, and by the invasion of Gentiles. For this pious wish was in the mind of every one, that the equestrian order and the vulgar multitude, which, after the example of Paganism, had been accustomed to occupy themselves in mutual slaughter might, in this way, find in arms a new mode of obtaining salvation; so that without embracing the monastic profession, or wholly leaving the world, they might, under their usual habit, perform their respective duties and win the grace of God*.” John, the abbot of Casa Maria, in his letter to St. Bernard relating the afflictions of the Crusaders in Palestine, and shewing with what humility they were received by them, as sent for their purification, adds this remarkable testimony, “those who have returned have assured me that they have seen many die there, who said, that they preferred

* *Gesta Dei per Francos.*

dying to returning, lest they should fall again into sins †."

James the First, King of Aragon, who recovered three kingdoms to Christianity, from the Moors, and evinced the love which animated him, by causing to be erected two thousand churches, furnished a striking instance, in his own person, of the purity and constancy of this faith. Bernardine Gomesius relates, that when this great king was preparing to set out on his expedition to Jerusalem, he came to Saragossa, where he was met by the queen, his daughter, with Peter and James, and also Sanctius the Archbishop, all of whom, as if in conspiracy, surrounded him, some embracing his neck, others falling at his feet, with tears and groans, praying that he would renounce so long and perilous a journey, and not leave them desolate as those who were to see his face no more. To whom the king replied, after embracing them all most lovingly, "In vain do you weep and afflict yourselves with lamentations, attempting to turn me aside from this holy expedition; since, what I owe to the celestial and common parent, God, is by far to be preferred to the things which I owe, on human grounds, to you, although my dearest children; for I have done what I could for you, to whom I leave far more than I received from my parents, and I have enriched you all with the glory of my deeds, which constitutes the best of patrimonies. Now the same celestial father calls me elsewhere: for what is greater than to recover the Sepulchre of his beloved Son Jesus Christ, and to rescue that gracious and holy land marked with his footsteps, from the impious enemies of his sacred name, who now occupy it? For I am bound to this expedition by the desire of my mind, and as if by a vow made in the beginning of my reign; also because hitherto Spaniards alone, of all kings, have been prevented from engaging in it, and lastly because the present is a favourable opportunity, two emperors, and a mighty force of land and sea combining, so that not to co-operate in such a pious and honourable task, would be not only disgraceful to the Spanish name, but also impious and detestable. In proportion too as our far-advanced age brings nearer to us the time of our death, we are the more admonished to

† S. Bern. Epist. cccclxxvi.

pour out for Christ what is left of our life; for I will not refuse to die for him who did not refuse to die for me." So saying, amidst tears and lamentations, and being no longer able to speak, having saluted all, he separated from them, and returned to Barcelona*.

Whatever views men may entertain respecting the cause itself, no one probably will refuse to admit, on the evidence of such passages, that it was defended by men of pure and simple hearts. Upon such good grounds did Dante build, when he placed the Crusader's spirit in the joys of paradise, for there he finds his ancestor Cacciaguido, who thus beautifully describes the death, which sent him to possess them.

" ————— I follow'd then
The Emperor Conrad; and his knighthood he
Did gird on me; in such good part he took
My valiant service. After him I went
To testify against that evil law,
Whose people, by the shepherd's fault, possess
Your right, usurping. There, by that foul crew,
Was I releas'd from the deceitful world
Whose base affection many a spirit soils:
And from the martyrdom came to this peace †."

Upon the whole then, from even this rapid glance at ancient manners, it will be sufficiently clear, that there was no need, in these ages of long and artful speech, to colour the different pursuits of life, each being followed with such pure intention. All that was in the heart could have been explained in a few simple words, like those of saintly Adalbert, in answer to the barbarians, who asked him to give some account of himself after they had struck him to the earth, while he was preaching on a little island in a river of Prussian Pomerania. "I am a slave," was his reply, "by name Adalbert, by profession a monk, formerly a bishop, now your apostle. The object of my journey is your salvation; that you may forsake your dumb idols, acknowledge your Creator, the only true God; and that by believing in him you may inherit everlasting life!" From the king to the lowest

* Bernardini Gomesii de vita Jacobi l. Arag. lib. xvii.

† Cant. xv.

vassal, every one could give a reason of the office which he had to discharge, in as clear and precise terms, though, in his own eyes, it was encompassed with a mystic light of true glory.

But we cannot remain longer to enjoy this extensive and richly varied prospect. Let us only remark, in descending, that it is the direction of the intention, and steady adherence to the duty prescribed, which has caused so many of the modern investigators of history, to lose the object of their toil. Their hunting through these regions is ardent, desperate, but in vain. They beat every cover—Hagiography, canon law, state papers, asceticism, scholastic controversy. They are soon in full cry after the game : they follow it closely, discover all its turns, and when every one expects to see them secure it, some strange and unaccountable delusion sends them away in quite an opposite direction. An impenetrable mist arises, which soon reduces to a piteous condition these late boasters, who may now, not undeservedly, be taunted with the appellation of dispatchers of history, as their phrase was ever, that, in few words, they would dispatch it. All their time and labour have been lost. The saint or hero, whose memory they pursued, with an aversion ill concealed by their professions of impartiality, vanishes from their view. The hallowed and devoted thoughts are hidden from them ; so instead of the inspiring sentences of old Catholic song, we are presented with the Thucydidean phrase, “The truest motive though least manifest in word.” They sought in fact themselves in history, and they have even found themselves, and well for them if it be not to their own destruction. Judging then of others from what they find within themselves, every thing is easily seen through and explained, and of course, in place of Catholic worthies, we find only men of the nineteenth century. History has proved to them like a magician’s wood which receives the knight and presents only a horrid phantom to his pursuer, a deformed spectral image to strike at which would be only beating the air. Hypocrites, blasphemers, magicians, ventriloquists, harlequins, murderers, seducers, and beings with the pride of Satan, rise up before them, where others, in the rays of the Eternal Wisdom, had seen the holy and the pure of heart. Let

us leave them shrouded in the mists of earth, combatting these phantoms : their hounds may bark on, but their chase will ever have the same result ; for this is mystic ground, and they who see no charity can find no truth.

CHAPTER III.

THE literature of the ages of faith, on which we have thrown a hasty glance in the preceding books, while tracing the influence which it received from humbleness of mind and the merciful spirit, would afford a vast field for delightful study if we were permitted by our limits to consider it fully in relation to the beatitude of the clean of heart. The course before us, however, is so extensive, and it will shortly lead us upon ground which so closely borders upon this domain, that I shall content myself at present with a few brief observations, which will be of no small avail if they can suggest to others, better skilled, the idea of pursuing for themselves this most interesting investigation.

The objection so often noticed to the literature of the middle ages, that it is wholly theological, and tinged with the views of men inhabiting a cloister, must present itself, in the first place, as furnishing evidence of the fact, which it is the object of this chapter to establish. That there is some truth in the charge cannot be doubted, since there could not be found a more appropriate motto for the whole learning of that period, than the words of St. Augustin : “ *Omnis mihi copia quæ Deus meus non est, egestas est* *.” That one whole department of modern literature, and not the least important where the associations of faith have perished, was comparatively wanting in the middle ages, might almost be inferred from the canons of Engelram, bishop of Metz, in the eighth century, which decree, that whoever has composed and disseminated amongst the people any writing injurious to the reputation of another, should be scourged if he could not prove what he advanced, and that who-

* Confess. xiii. 8.

ever should first find such a writing was to tear it in pieces, on pain of being treated as its author*.”

Were we, however, to analyse the numerous popular charges against the literary productions of the middle ages, whatever might be the terms in which they were conveyed, I believe we should find that most of them sprung from no other source but that which prompts Euripides to ridicule Æschylus in the shades, who when the latter had boasted, in recommendation of himself, that he had never introduced amatory scenes into his pieces, replies to him :

Μὰ Δι' οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν τῆς Ἀφροδίτης οὐδέν σοι †.

This it is, in reality, which causes so many volumes of the middle ages to slumber upon shelves, and to be consigned to moths and obscurity, as being unreadable, wearisome, and barbarous; while every hand holds some book exhibiting the stops that train our intellects to vain delight, which bears proof of having been written, not indeed in a cell, or upon a buckler, but in some palace of indolence, amidst wine and merriment, which might remind one of the reply of Lainez, when surprise was expressed on his being found, at eight o'clock in the morning, in the king's library, after a late supper :

“ Regnat nocte calix, volvuntur biblia mane,
Cum Phœbo Bacchus dividit imperium.”

It is not that any sweet affection of our nature is altogether banished from these ancient books, but that every image is shrouded in such a mystic robe of innocence and purity, that all attraction for the vitiated fancy is destroyed. The poet, in his Lay of the Last Minstrel, has caught the true spirit of this ancient literature, when, after relating the astonishment of Margaret of Branksome on beholding Cranstoun stalking below within the castle court, into which he had been enabled, by his goblin page, to pass undiscovered, he continues :

“ Oft have I mused what purpose bad
That vile malicious urchin had

* Longueval, Hist. de l'Eglis. Gal. v. 12.

† Aristoph. Ranæ, 1057.

To bring this meeting round :
 For happy love 's a heavenly sight,
 And by a vile malignant sprite,
 In such no joy is found :
 And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
 Their erring passion might have wrought
 Sorrow, and sin, and shame,
 And death to Cranstoun's gallant knight,
 And to the gentle lady bright
 Disgrace, and loss of fame.
 But earthly spirit could not tell
 The heart of them that loved so well ;
 True love's the gift which God has given
 To man alone beneath the heaven.
 It is not fantasy's hot fire,
 Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ;
 It liveth not in fierce desire,
 With dead desire it doth not die ;
 It is the secret sympathy,
 The silver link, the silken tie,
 Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
 In body and in soul can bind."

This was the affection which breaks out often in an unexpected manner in monuments which attest the existence of love in the middle ages ; as in the Prayer-book of Charles the Bald, written in letters of gold, in which we find this verse added to the Litanies at the end : " Ut Hirmindrudim conjugem nostram conservare digneris, te rogamus, audi nos." The indulgence of the passions as exhibited, and often recommended, in the modern literature, was so opposed to the public sense of Catholic states in ages of faith, that instruction was conveyed in every form imaginable, to warn men from its danger. Under an image of the blessed Virgin and the Divine Child, inscriptions used to be placed for this purpose in the streets of cities. There is an ancient house near Cadenabbia, on the Lake of Como, upon which may still be read these lines, beneath a fresco painting of the Virgin Mother : " Sin is like the fire, which begins by little and little. He who follows profane love, departs far from God. The contumacious sinner has no peace with heaven. Of that which you commit to-day, the fruit you will to-morrow taste. The crucifix is a great book to the man who hath a fixed regard."

Undoubtedly there can be discovered here and there

books of the middle ages which can satisfy any taste, however abject, as the collectors of facetiæ need not be told, who love to furnish out their shelves; but the picture of the affections by the poet I have cited is strictly historical, for any other would have been in violation of the chivalrous type; and those who in the sixteenth century began to innovate and dissolve the mysticism, and invent tales in the spirit of Boccaccio, were in Catholic society regarded as heretics, while their works were committed to the flames amidst the execrations of the people. At the same time we may remark, that to purity of heart the ages of faith were indebted also for the universality of the range which was open to poetry and literature; and even, though perhaps at rare and brief intervals, for the enjoyment of dramatic representations, in accordance with the fancy of the innocent and the taste of the religious. So early indeed as in the fifth century we find that actors were excommunicated by a decree of the Council of Arles, yet the decision of St. Antoninus with respect to the compatibility of such recreations with the Christian profession*, and also the express sanction of the Angel of the School, are facts of no small importance in the history of dramatic literature. St. Thomas, whose sentiments respecting every obstacle to angelic purity may be conceived, concludes his judgment on this point in these words: "All things which are useful to human society, can be considered as lawful offices. And therefore, even the office of actors, which is ordained to afford recreation to men, is not in itself unlawful, nor are they in a state of sin, provided they use that play moderately, that is, not using any unlawful words or actions, either in themselves shameful, or calculated to injure their neighbours, and do not indulge in that play at improper seasons; consequently they who moderately assist them, do not sin†." Perhaps, however, the belief in the possibility of such a condition of the drama, constitutes the most curious part of this passage; for in practice, it is to be feared, the adjustment could have been at no time a task without difficulty; though still it is true, that it was in later ages, when Benedict XIV. declared that it was with regret he found himself obliged to tolerate theatres in Rome, and in other cities of the ecclesiastical states.

* P. 2. tit. 23. § 14.

† II. 2. Q. 163. art. 3. ad. 3.

That the theological character of the literature of the middle ages, which is made a ground of objection to it, presents the most remarkable evidence of the moral purity of men in those times, is a proposition which does not admit of being questioned. What might not be adduced, if our limits permitted us to speak of the wonderful effects of the angelic life upon the eloquence of preachers, and the style of those exquisite compositions, by which ascetic writers taught the divine art of meditation and conference with God! But I must refer the reader to the work of Goerres for reflections on this theme.

Another characteristic of the literature of the ages of faith, which affords evidence of the purity which had been imparted to the human heart, is its inherent antipathy to Paganism. This literary revolution may be witnessed in the earliest Christian works, as in those of Clemens Alexandrinus and Minutius Felix, exposing the turpitudes of heathen mythology*, and in those of St. Augustin, referring to the impure sectaries of the East. But it is complete in the works of the middle age, when men whose eyes were opened, could endure no more the filth of Paganism, and laboured to efface its stains. Accordingly no language can be too strong to express the change which was effected in the European mind by the revival of the Pagan literature in the sixteenth century, when men began not only to revere, as the most glorious types of humanity, such names as Tacitus and Suetonius, whom the philosophers of the middle age used to speak of as priests of idols, ambitious, wicked, and adulterous, if their lives might be judged of from their own words, but even to extol as poetical and humane that Greek mythology, the pernicious influence of which had been exposed with so much feeling by the wiser heathens themselves, as may be witnessed in the work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus†. It is not that the monastic literature evinced no acquaintance with the heathen authors. A French writer observes, that “a learned monk of the twelfth century had a great number of ideas, philosophic, moral, and literary, in common with Cicero‡;” but that every thing repugnant to Christianity was rejected with abhorrence, and nothing suffered, as it were,

* *Protrepticus*.

† *Antiq. Rom. lib. ii. c. 20.*

‡ *Villemain, Tableau de la Littérature au Moyen Age, i. 100.*

to enter, until clothed, at least for once, in a religious habit.

During the middle ages the licentious poets of Greece and Rome were suffered to slumber in the repositories of the ancient learning. To substitute for lascivious amours and gross indecencies, the praise of chastity and the triumphs of faith over the temptations of nature, was indeed the aim of many, who, like Roswitha, attempted to imitate the heathen writers; but in general they struck out new paths for themselves; and in the Poems of a St. Avitus, a Dante, and a Calderon, the wisdom of Christians was seen to be more beautiful than the fancy of the heathens: "Incomparabiliter pulchrior," says St. Augustin, "est veritas Christianorum quam Helena Græcorum *." There was sung no Bacchus and no Io Pæan, but three Persons in the Godhead, and in one Person that nature and the human joined. There were no classical imitations that interfered with faith; witness St. Aldhelm's invocation, in his poem *De Laude Virginum* :

" Non rogo ruricolæ versus, et commata Musas :
Non peto Castalidas metrorum cantica nymphas
Quas dicunt Heliconæ jugum servare supernum ;
Nec precor, ut Phœbus linguam sermone loquacem
Dedat, quem Delo peperit Latona creatrix :
Sed potius nitar precibus pulsare Tonantem
Qui nobis placidi confert oracula verbi.
Verbum de Verbo peto, hoc psalmista canebat.
Sic Patris et Proles dignetur Spiritus almus,
Auxilium fragili clementer dedere servo."

Poetry in general, in ages of faith, could yield remarkable evidence of the purification of the human heart. Many were believed to write verses through the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God. Cedman, the Anglo-Saxon, whose history Bede relates, Joseph, the hymnographer amongst the Greeks in the ninth century, and in later times Jacoponus, were regarded by their contemporaries as having received the gift of song from heaven; and truly no one who has ever heard their compositions, and reflected on the relation in which they stood to God and to the world, can judge that opinion strange †.

* Epist. X.

† Goerres *die Christliche Mystik* ii. 161.

The observation of Œlred of Rivaux, that no page pleased him which was not sweetened with the Saviour's name, might be extended even to the views of history, which were adopted by men of the middle ages; for in all their compendiums, the events of heathen times are represented in connexion with the eternal designs of Almighty Providence to visit and redeem the world. Thus the Duchess of Beneventum, who, we are told, was familiar with the golden sayings of the philosophers, and the gemmed sentences of poets, objected to Eutropius, that as a Pagan he says nothing of Christian history, and therefore Paul the Deacon, monk of Monte Casino, translated it, "*aornée de addictions Catholiques.*" Learning, in their eyes, derived all its value from the religious point of view. Hugo of St. Victor says to a great doctor, "I love indeed your erudition, but I love still more to contemplate Him; because what I love in your erudition, is only lovely to me from its leading me to contemplate Him *."

We have before had occasion to observe, that the purest motives, and the most sincere love of truth, are visible in those chronicles of the middle age, at which so many artless and devoted men disinterestedly toiled. One cannot but feel assured of their sincerity, even from the slight incidental allusions to themselves, which escape them; as when, in the beginning of his eleventh book, Hieronymus Rubeus, the learned and noble physician of Ravenna, says, "After seventeen years spent in writing this history of Ravenna, I had abandoned all idea of writing more, or of reading any thing except what was sacred and pious, that to my Lord calling I might not come wholly unprepared †." This unpremeditated opening of their interior gives a glimpse, which every reader must know how to appreciate. These works were often the fruits of holy obedience too; as when, in 1099, by command of Eustorgius, bishop of Limoges, and the advice of Gaubert the Norman, abbot of Usercia, Gregory Bechade de Turribus, a knight of most subtle genius, and imbued in some degree with letters, composed a huge volume, in vulgar rythme, on the Deliverance of Jerusalem, on which work he spent twelve years ‡.

* Lib. Expos. in Cœlest. Hierarch.

† In Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. tom. vii.

‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 522.

Voigt observing, that no work throws such light upon the history of Prussia in the fourteenth century, as the Annals composed in 1390, by John of Pusilie, President of the Chapter of Pomerania, a Prussian priest, remarks, that it displays not only an accurate knowledge of events, but a most ardent love of truth; and in fact what else could have induced these simple-minded holy men to write books? It is each of these, indeed, who might have justly used the poet's words, and said, "From the records of my youthful state, and from the love of bards and sages old, have I collected language to unfold truth to my countrymen."

Speaking of Elfric, Abbot of Peterborough, a late author says, "His only motives were a Christian love of his kind, and a deep sense of the importance of wisdom, or in part, perhaps, a generous desire to live in the memory of Englishmen*."

Such were the writers who, in the middle ages, inspired in the public mind a passion for history, which was generally possessed in connexion with a love for sacred literature, as in the instance of that brave knight and renowned poet the Landgrave Hermann, of Thuringia, in the thirteenth century, who is styled *Historiarum sacrarumque lectionum amator*†.

Geoffrey de Beaulieu the Dominican, confessor of St. Louis during twenty-two years, who followed him every where till he received his last breath, and Guillaume de Chartres, chaplain to the king, who continued also ever at his side, are writers who may be cited as true representatives of the historians of the middle ages, writing from personal knowledge, writing with love; for after the death of St. Louis, Geoffrey would never quit the body, but day and night was always praying by the coffin, whether on board the ship, or on the road through Lombardy and Saxony; writing through holy obedience, for Pope Gregory X. ordered him to write the king's life, which was continued by Guillaume de Chartres, who had suffered imprisonment with him, during which time he used to recite every day the office before him; and writing without any view to magnify themselves; for he describes in detail the courage of the king in prison, but passes over

* Dissection of the Saxon Chronicle, 67.

† Paulin. Annal. Isenac.

his own sufferings, and never speaks of himself excepting through necessity, and then in few words.

Leo of Ostia furnishes another example, when about to write the history of Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino; for he speaks thus: "Many things I have learned from his own truth-telling lips, while with too great goodness choosing to have me at his side. Some I have heard from certain priors, others lastly I relate from what I have seen with my own eyes, having been with him almost to the day of his death. Therefore I wish to make my reader assured that I shall make no extrinsic additions to this little work, and that I shall write nothing concerning him but what I have found to be true, as one who remembers having read, with a simple understanding, "*Perdes, Domine, omnes qui loquuntur mendacium* *."

Petrus Diacanus being ordered to continue the work of Leo, speaks in these terms: "When I see so many and such men in this sacred cloister full of liberal discipline, I feel inclined to succumb to the burden imposed on me. As for my means of information, from the time of Abbot Gerard, who first received me into the school of Mount Casino, I have heard some of these things from the mouth of the venerable Abbot Seniorecto, and others I have seen with my own eyes while attending the imperial court for the cause of the monastery, and others I have heard from our priors, and other faithful men. If it would not have displeased your paternity, I should have left the task to others, for I have never applied to liberal discipline, but from my first noviciate I have always, by Christ's grace, been occupied with divine expositions and ancient annals. But may He who puts into the mouth of his servants to speak how and what and when he wishes, grant me words, for all wisdom is from God; and if any one want wisdom, let him ask it from God, and he will fill him. And as there are some things, perhaps, in which I deserve to be reprehended by the wise, let this be imputed to our weakness; but if there be any thing blameless, let them ascribe it not to me but to God †."

Indeed the simplicity and humility of their language might alone convince any one that they wrote without

* *Chronic. S. Monast. Cas. lib. iii. Prolog.*

† *Chron. Casinen. lib. iv. Prolog.*

any sinister aim. Gaufred Malaterra, the monk, addresses the venerable Bishop of Catana, saying, "Having had the unhappy mundane course with Martha, I was commanded by Roger, Count of Sicily, to write this History of the Conquest of Calabria and Sicily, by Robert Guiscard and his brother, in a plain and clear style, that every one could understand*."

If sincerity of intention can be inferred from the style of chronicles, it is hardly necessary to add, that men whose works were more immediately concerned with philosophy, evinced a love of truth no less pure and devoted. But how can one express the impressions of this kind, made by the didactive treatises of the middle age? who can describe the exquisite tone of candour which pervades them? tone inimitable, which almost imparts to all who hear it the privilege of Him who can discern hearts: tone, in short, which indicated faith, and which in every age is the same; for it is precisely identical whether we find it in the treatises of a Hugo of St. Victor, in the eleventh century, or in our own time, in the few hasty letters of a Spenser, in whom one may behold the life of those ancient meek ones, who to an erring world were the chosen messengers of Christ.

With respect to those writings, which were the farthest removed from laying claim to merit as literary compositions, I cannot but think that there was something even in the rusticity of their style that could yield a degree of security to those who read them.

The author of *Horologium Devotionis circa vitam Christi*, after saying in his Prologue that he composed it at the prayer of a certain devout soldier of happy memory, whose name is known to God, continues in these terms: "I, brother Bertold, a priest of the order of Preachers, having departed flying away, and remained in solitude seven years, have composed one little book, in the Teutonic tongue, on the life of Christ, his passion, and most dolorous death, which I have named the Clock of Devotion; but because things written in the Teutonic tongue have very little taste to learned men, on that account I have taken pains to transfer the said book into Latin, and with the help of God, grammatical—in Latinum et in grammaticam Dei adjutorio transferri curavi, in a

* Ganfredi Monachi Hist. lib. i.

plain style, without rhetorical colouring, lest devotion should be destroyed by curiosity, and the adornment of words." This is simple, sooth; yet those who had drunk deep of the old learning, were fond even of the unambitious, artless manner, in which it was conveyed. The more point-device and irritable tone of later writers, though assumed apparently to please, would have often offended the delicate tact which apprised them, in books that seemed the least suspicious, of some latent danger to purity or truth. Certainly it requires no mystic gift of vision, like that which enabled the holy Joseph of Cupertino to discern from the countenance of a stranger what was in his heart, to discover through the polished surface of many books, written in later times, the stains of interior impurity. The glance of an ordinary mortal without extacy, is quite sufficient for detecting it. And it may assuredly be affirmed, that a reflecting student, after reading the remarks of Malebranche on the style of Seneca and Montaigne, will be little disposed to nauseate that of the monastic literature. "The pleasure which one takes in reading these authors," says this metaphysician, "springs from concupiscence, and it fortifies the passions. Generally, the pleasure which we take in different manners of writing arises from nothing else but the secret corruption of our hearts*." Montaigne himself says, "In my time I am deceived if the worst books be not those which have gained the most popular favour:" a judgment to which Joseph Scaliger would agree; for he says, "In this kingdom of France there is given liberty of writing to all men, but the faculty of writing truly and rightly only to a few†." And again, "Daily I see many persons studious, but few learned; amongst the learned, few ingenious; amongst the half learned, no good men; and so letters, the only consolation of the human race, are now in the place of a pestilence and a scourge‡." If you pursue the comparison down to later times, you will find that these inventions of men, who, as Pasquier says, "have more leisure than learning," only verify the remark of Scaliger, that "amongst so many thousand authors, you shall scarce find one, by reading of whom you shall be any whit

* Lib. ii. 5.

† Jos. Scaligeri Epist. lib. i. 3.

‡ Id. 96.

better, but rather much worse *," and perhaps there are many of them which prove the truth of Cato's prediction, when he said, "gens ista quoties litteras suas dabit omnia perdet." The contrast, in short, between the literature of the ages of faith, and that of later times, is the same as that which exists between the men themselves. The one tranquil with luminous piety, the other turbulent with dark desires.

But our observation must not be confined to literature:—this is only one side of the spacious and richly varied poetic field.

Goerres, in his admirable work on Christian Mysticism, has remarked the influence of ascetic purity upon musical science, in the middle ages. The unearthly tones which pervade the old Catholic compositions, are indeed a sufficient proof of spiritual communion with a holier world. The gift of song was imparted to many purified souls, as to Hildegard, and the saintly sisters of St. Oringa. The holy Catherine, of Bologna, with eyes turned to heaven, repeated to her astonished sisters the song which she had heard in praise of God, when so far spent with sickness, that she had received the last unction: such jubilation filled her heart, while repeating to them that sweet song, that all who saw her thought that she must die for joy; but she remained one year more on earth. The holy Hermann Joseph, of Steinfeld, while composing a hymn in honour of St. Ursula, is said to have received aid from the pure spirits which he loved for sake of Jesus; and Palestrina himself, has said of his best compositions, that he only wrote what he had heard angels sing †. With music, painting also experienced the influence of purified souls.

Rio remarks, in his charming book on Christian Art, that the works of painters, as those of poets, when encouraged and eulogised by their contemporaries and fellow countrymen, are the faithful mirror of the national genius; and truly, during the middle ages, amongst painters, the mystic clean of heart appeared conspicuous. The judgment of the moderns can be appealed to here, and the poet's words on a picture of the Assumption, by Murillo, adduced in proof: for he exclaims,—

* Epist. ad Petav.

† Christliche Mystik ii. 157.

“ What innocence, what love, what loveliness,
 What purity must have familiar been
 Unto thy soul, before it could express
 The holy beauty in that visage seen *!”

What might he not have said on the sublime and astonishing figure of St. Francis receiving the stigmata, by Guercino, which is in the church of Sancta Maria in Carignano at Genoa? What on the master-pieces of Francesco Francia, or on the paintings of the mystic school in Italy, before a fondness for the mere imitation of uninspired nature, and the taste for Pagan models, had created a new race of artists disdainful of the old? What might not be said on that seraphic expression, full of sweet desire, which constitutes the peculiar merit of the Umbrian School, in the works of Perugino and his disciples, or indeed in any of the old pictures of devotion, in our ancient churches, before modern hands had corrected them as barbarous? “Frequently,” says this eloquent author, “we pass in proud disdain before miraculous pictures, which have exercised the most delicious influence on an innumerable multitude of souls, during the course of many ages. We do not consider that this mute image of the Madonna and the infant Jesus, has spoken a mysterious and consoling language to more than one heart, sufficiently humble and pure to comprehend it, and that there are no tears perhaps more precious before God, than those which have moistened the stone of these modest oratories †.” In fact, as few need be reminded, the artist of the middle age was frequently a man of saintly interior life, so that the poet, here cited, did not err in his conclusion, that he must have had a pure heart. Giovanni of Pisa, the great sculptor who made the pulpit of the cathedral, representing many events in the life of Christ, which work was finished in 1320, placed these verses on it—

“ Laudo Deum verum, per quem sunt optima rerum,
 Qui dedit has puras hominem formare figuras.”

Giotto is commemorated as having been no less a good christian than excellent painter. “Michael Angelo,” says

* Trench.

† De l'art Chretien, 161.

Vasari, "loved much the holy Scriptures as a good christian"—he greatly loved the beauty of the human figure, but never with dishonest thought." Speaking of Ambrogio Lorenzetti, painter of Sienna, the same author observes, "how he was learned and good, and kept company with the best men; how every thing bespoke in him the lover of wisdom; and how constant he was, and pious." "Truly," he adds, "one cannot say how much gentle customs and modesty, with other virtues, conduce to all arts, and particularly to that which has such a connection with intelligence." Gentil Bellini, in a grand painting which represents a miracle effected by a portion of the cross, placed under it this simple and affecting inscription:—"Gentilis Bellinus amore incensus crucis, 1490." John of Fiesoli belonged to the Dominican order, in which he was so revered for sanctity, that the brethren styled him the angelic. "Brother Angelico might have led," says Vasari, "a very happy life in the world, but as he wished, above all things, to provide for the salvation of his soul, he embraced a religious life, without renouncing his no less decided vocation for painting, reconciling thus the care of his eternal happiness, with the acquisition of an immortal name amongst men." Vasari concludes that such an extraordinary talent as he possessed could only be the attendant on the highest sanctity, for to succeed as he did in religious subjects, the artist himself must be religious and holy. Called to Rome by Pope Eugene IV., his paintings in the Vatican, of the histories of St. Laurence and of St. Stephen, admirable as they were, did not make such an impression on the Pontiff as the soul of the artist, so that the see of Florence, being vacant, he conceived the idea of conferring upon him the Archiepiscopal office; but the humility of brother Angelico prevailed, and it was the praise with which he then spoke of brother Antoninus, that occasioned the latter to be made Archbishop of Florence by Nicholas V. At the court of Rome he lived as in his cloister, and Pope Nicholas was obliged to compel him, on obedience, to moderate his austerities. He never painted a crucifixion without shedding many tears, and worked at that, as also at the figures of the blessed Virgin, always on his knees. Michael Angelo said, that it was humanly impossible to paint such a blessed form as he composed of Mary, in

his picture of the Annunciation: the painter must have beheld her. And Goerres says, that in this, as in many other of his works, besides the exquisite grace and beauty resulting from skill, it is impossible not to recognise a still higher beauty, evincing all the characteristics of mystic vision. James, the German, on his return from the Holy Land, furnished another instance of this wonderful combination of art and purity. Of his heroic obedience as a monk, a curious instance is recorded: on one occasion, having placed a beautiful painting on glass in the furnace, the prior, to prove his merit, ordered him to take his black cap and go into the streets to beg alms; he complied without a word, and remained absent many hours; on his return he went anxiously to the furnace, and found that all had succeeded; the painting, in the lines and colours, had become faultless, and in fact incomparable*. Lippo Dalmasio, in whom the traditional piety of the old Bolognese school was so conspicuous, may be added to these great examples, for he like Jacopo Avanzi would paint nothing but images of the blessed Virgin, and he never sat down to paint without having fasted the day before, and gone to communion on the morning itself, in order to purify his imagination and sanctify his pencil. In his latter days he embraced the monastic life, and continued to paint Madonnas, which he distributed as alms among the people. Guido discerned something supernatural in his paintings, and affirmed that no study or talents could give the power of combining, in a figure, such holiness, modesty, and purity. He used often to be seen in an extacy before one of his pictures, when uncovered on some festival of the blessed Virgin. That the artist of the middle ages regarded himself as the Preacher's assistant, is expressly affirmed by Buffalmacco, one of the pupils of Giotto; "As for us painters," saith he, "our sole business is to make saints, holy men, and holy women, on walls and over altars, in order that by their means, men, to the great despite of demons, may be more disposed to piety and virtue†."

It was the spirit of mutual edification which gave rise to the confraternity of painters, under the invocation of

* Goerres *Christliche Mystik* ii. 155.

† Vasari.

St. Luke, in 1350. They had their periodical meetings, not from ambition to communicate their discoveries, and receive homage from each other, but simply to sing the praise of God. Evidence of the number of the pure, results not only from observing the character and works of the artists themselves, but also from an examination of the state of the public mind, in those ages, in relation to art, and of the taste of that society which so highly appreciated and encouraged them. Lorenzo Costa painted for the chapel of John Bentivoglio, in the church of St. James at Bologna, a portrait of that nobleman, with his wife, his four sons, and his seven daughters, beneath an image of the blessed Virgin; and the father's prayer is thus expressed,—

“ Me, patriam, et dulces carâ cum conjuge natos,
Commendo precibus, Virgo beata, tuis.”

It was for the confraternity of St. Mark, and of St. John the Evangelist, that Gentil Bellini executed many magnificent paintings. Capaccio traced the legend of St. Ursula, in a series of eight great pictures, for the confraternity which bears her name, the history of St. Jerome, and that of St. George for another confraternity, and the history of the Protomartyr, for the brotherhood of St. Stephen. Mansueti was similarly encouraged at Venice, to paint for the two confraternities of St. Mark and St. John.

Now from this hasty glance at artists, and the condition of art in the middle ages, it is clear that much and unobjectionable evidence, of the kind which we require, can be collected from them. If there be any doubt, let men only consider whether they deem it possible, that such a race of artists and of patrons could return, unless there were to take place a great purification of the public mind, and a change in manners to correspond with such works and with such patronage. Were another Savanorola to arise, and to appear in the metropolis of the modern civilization, it is much to be feared that we should not see philosophers and poets, artists of all kinds, sculptors, painters, and engravers, offering themselves with enthusiasm to him, to be the docile instruments of the social reform which he would propose to effect, as was witnessed in Florence, when the Friar of St. Dominick preached penance. It was not till the fifteenth century

that artists, and patrons of arts, began to exhibit a taste for the style and subjects of heathen antiquity, after which epoch, the Christian school of painting, banished from learned capitals, will be found in the monasteries on the Tuscan mountains, where, in the next book, we shall have occasion again to mention it.

The Pagan taste has, in its turn, been superseded by a style, which consists in an attempt to follow mere unsanctified nature; so just is the remark of Rio, that “the philosophy and manners of men are discernible from their works of art.” The present school of painting therefore, derives inspiration from other sources besides purity of heart.

But this is ground from which I gladly turn as one who thinks every step lost until he regain his path.

CHAPTER IV.

WE have proceeded but a short distance on this pleasant way, which unfolds the human spirit purged from sinful blot in generations that are gone by, and we have already a glimpse at the marvellous reward conferred upon it; for evidence crowds in upon us from all sides, to illustrate how the blessed clean of heart, during ages of faith, were enabled, even in the present life, to attain in some degree to the vision in which it is declared their beatitude will everlastingly consist. “Mundus Deus,” saith St. Jerome, “mundo corde conspicitur.” Facts bore witness that he erred not. But what shall we say of the intellectual illumination consequent on such a vision? The light of Christ had kindled innumerable souls, which each in turn became instrumental to its diffusion throughout the nations. Truly the earth may be said to have rejoiced, irradiated with such brightness, and the whole world to have felt that it had lost darkness, before the light of the splendour of the eternal King. Well might Mother Church, adorned with the lustre of such beams, rejoice with the angelic crowd of heaven, and call upon her children at the wondrous splendour of this holy light to invoke with her the mercy of Almighty God. The

ages which we have hitherto surveyed as bearing fruits of humility, meekness, mourning, justice, and mercy, must therefore now pass before us, in relation to that knowledge of truth which is implied in the vision of God ; consequently, whatever forms part of their philosophic history must now be investigated.

The gift of understanding, according to St. Augustin, makes men possessors of the sixth beatitude. "The sixth operation of the Holy Spirit, which is intelligence, relates," saith he, "to the clean of heart, who, with a purified eye, can behold what eye hath not seen *." And the author of the Moral Mirror, ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, observes that men ought to be moved to seek purity of heart, because, acquiring or recovering it, they acquire or recover the splendour of knowledge, according to what is written :— "*Spiritus intelligentiæ mundus subtilis et quanto mundior tanto subtilior †.*" "Therefore," he continues, "it is said, blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God—at present by grace, in contemplation, and hereafter by glory, beholding him without veil, face to face ‡."

Indeed, from the beginning and all through the middle ages it had been shown that, as Savonarola says, even for advancement in human philosophy, and especially in metaphysics, cleanness of heart, which appeases all the passions of the mind, was indispensable§. The influence of moral purity upon the intellectual character of the ages involved in this history presents an immense field which might have furnished additional evidence in proof of the number of the clean of heart during the predominance of faith ; but as it affords likewise all the requisite illustrations to explain the temporal fulfilment of the divine promise respecting the reward ordained for them, it will be best to change our line of argument, and henceforth, assuming that this purity existed, confine our view to its intellectual results. Nevertheless I would not pass on without remarking that we might have produced this additional store of evidence if it had been required, as every one conversant with antiquity will

* De Serm. Dom. in Monte.

† Sap. 7.

‡ Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. lib. i. par. iv. dist. 21.

§ Triump. Crucis, lib. i. 13.

perceive; for that the philosophical history of these ages, and all the vast store of mystic literature connected with it, yields direct and incidental evidence of moral purity—the former in attesting the graces of eminent men, the latter in exhibiting results which, without cleanness of heart, could not have been obtained,—is a proposition which, I presume, need be only announced to be universally admitted.

Socrates inquires why the greatest number of the philosophers are perverse men: he does not make it a question whether they are or are not perverse*; and, contrariwise, we might ask why not alone the greatest number, but all the eminent teachers of Catholic philosophy were holy men. He tells of all who mentions one. Would you take examples? “A lover of justice and goodness, a foe to wickedness and malice, rather deservedly than accidentally styled Innocent,” is the testimony of Gunther to the character of Pope Innocent III. †

“Thomas was an angel before he was the angelic doctor,” says Labbæus, of the angel of the school ‡. “The most learned and most holy Thomas of Aquin,” says Bishop Fisher, “I more willingly mention, because the impiety of Luther could not endure the sanctity of that man §.”

Alexander de Hales ascribes such innocence and purity to St. Bonaventura, that he says, “Adam does not seem to have sinned in Bonaventura.” Staudenmaier remarks that “the acute and deep scholastics, as Erigena, Anselm of Canterbury, Hugo of St. Victor, Bonaventura, Thomas of Aquin, and others, were at the same time also high moral characters, pure, in harmony with nature, exhibiting the wonderful phenomenon of an interior Christian life.” Again, a type of philosophers in those ages was Stephen Langton, as described by the old writers,—“A man illustrious in life and science—a man mighty in life, in renown, in science, and in learning.” Highly remarkable, too, are the very terms in which these witnesses convey their opinion of such men: as where Rainer, whom Pope Innocent III. sent to Spain, is described as

* De Repub. lib. vi.

† Gunther, Hist. Cptana IX. in Canisii Lect. Antiq. iv.

‡ Inter Elog. P. Lab. 64.

§ In Confut. Libri de Cap. Babil.

“a man equally to be revered for science and for religion, for both most acceptable to God and to men*,” and Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, on the accession of King John, as “a man of a profound breast, a pillar of stability to the realm, and of incomparable wisdom†.” The reader must perceive at once that it would be quite useless to multiply testimonies of this kind, for when we have merely named any of the great luminaries of the school in the middle ages every one understands instinctively vessels of all grace; and if the admirable change which cleanness of heart had effected in the manners of the intellectually great and learned should not, at first sight, forcibly strike every reader, he may be assisted by reminding him of the testimony borne by a beloved disciple to the virtue of the wisest and best of the ancient philosophers, which yet amounted to no more than this: *Καὶ ὁ πάντων θαυμαστότατον, Σωκράτη μεθύοντα οὐδεὶς πώποτε ἐώρακεν ἀνθρώπων* ‡. We shall soon, however, have occasion to observe that the teachers of truth in these ages expressly maintained the necessity of wishing, as St. Augustin says, to purify the soul in order to see truth—not of wishing to see truth in order to purify the soul §. They continually reminded each other, with St. Thomas, that “they are styled salt before they are called light, by Truth itself, because life is before doctrine, for life leads to the knowledge of truth ||.” Their constant supplication was that which the holy Joseph of Copertino was heard to utter in his ecstasy,—“*Fiat Domine cor meum immaculatum, ut non confundar ¶!*” Let us pass on, therefore, at once to view the happy spirits cleansed from sin on earth, in relation to intellectual good, to trace the influence of moral purity upon the philosophic character, and to receive the evidence in general which can be collected from the writings of these ages, in proof that the divine promise had even a temporal fulfilment. At the outset of this investigation we are presented with one of the many results exhibited in the intellectual history of the ages of faith, which indisputably, without purity of heart, could not have been obtained; for the

* Gesta Innoc. III.

† Matt. Par. 138.

‡ Plat. Conviv. 35.

§ De Util. Cred.

|| S. Thom. in c. 5. Matt.

¶ Goerres Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 257.

first fact which forces itself upon our notice is the predominance of an intellectual as well as of a moral conscience. There is no closing of eyes to this fact, that during ages of faith the former reigned, if not uninterruptedly, at least to an unparalleled degree, so as to influence the whole public mind and constitution of all Christian nations. From whatever side we proceed to examine the truth of this statement, we shall find that it is solidly grounded and beyond refutation; for in the first place, the intense and devoted love of truth which influenced men is a fact that cannot be set aside. To the lowest member of a Catholic state, in ages of faith, as well as to the philosopher in the schools, and to the statesman of the type of Suger, in the court of princes, one might have applied the magnificent words of the Greek poet,—

*Θάσσεις ἐν ἀψευδεῖ θρόνῳ *.*

Each one, from merely adhering to the church, and drinking from its living streams, became fixed and fruitful, and might be truly said to sit upon a throne, and as a presiding judge to have dominion such as no earthly power could overcome or bend. The constancy of the two Dominicans who chose to die with Savonarola rather than cease to render public testimony to his innocence, for they were charged with no other crime†, may be witnessed as an example; for if men were thus immovable, ready to die rather than not bear true witness for their neighbour, what could prevent them from bearing witness to the truth of that glorious vision of God, which embraced all things in one? Truth prevailed accordingly, and that is to say every thing; for I mean truth not scientific or curiosity, but moral and religious, of life and manners—truth mystic and holy, placing a curb upon the passions of men, annihilating their pride, prostrating selfishness, effecting all interests, determining all relations, directing all views—Catholic truth, joyous and blessed indeed to the clean of heart, but full of difficulties and inconveniences to the slaves of passion, that is to all men but those whom grace made pure. This return of

* Eurip. Iph. in Taur. 1242.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 23.

multitudes to the understanding of their own honour is, after all, the grand pre-eminent event which has characterized the ages which we are considering; for how irreparably lost to such truth was the vast majority of the human race previous to their commencement! The most acute and practical of the ancient philosophers said, that "it was impossible to turn the multitude to understand the beautiful and good, since, living by passion," saith he, "they pursue their private pleasures, but they fly from suffering and grief, and they have no conception how truly sweet is the beautiful and good, for they have never tasted it. And what discourse could correct these? It is not possible, at least it is not easy, to change by discourse the things which have been transfused into the manners of men from old time *." "The parts of the philosophic nature," says Socrates, "are seldom born united in one and the same person, but in general they exist dispersed and separated; for men that have the talent of learning with facility, and the gift of memory, that have wit and penetration and the other qualities which are of a like nature, are seldom born with a disposition to generous and noble sentiments, with a desire to live decorously, orderly, in peace and steady fixedness of condition οἱ κοσμίως μετὰ ἡσυχίας καὶ βεβαιότητος ἐθέλειν ζῆν; but such persons, by the quickness of their disposition, are carried away in whatever direction they happen to take, and steady fixedness is totally foreign to them—καὶ τὸ βέβαιον ἅπαν ἐξ αὐτῶν οἴχεται. How must this disorder of the heart pervert and obscure the judgment! On the other hand," he observes, "those who are of steady fixed manners, not easily changed, and in whom confidence can be placed, are but ill disposed for learning; for they are hard to be moved, and hard to be instructed, being, as it were, stupified with the touch of a torpedo, under the influence of sleep and yawning whenever they are obliged to do any thing; and we have shown that it is necessary to possess both these elements, or else never be qualified to fill any important office †."

This is a sad picture of the intellectual state of our nature; nor will it appear less deplorable, if examined with the eyes of men in ages of faith, for that will only

* Aristotle, Ethic. lib. x. cap. 9.

† Plato de Repub. lib. vi.

serve to give a more aggravated idea of the depths from which it had to return when brought to the light of faith and to the purity of the clean of heart. Man, when he was in honour, did not understand, but fell to a similitude with beasts, "because," observes Vincent of Beauvais, "he swelled against truth, illuminating himself; he incurred infirmity, blindness, and all kinds of vanity: and therefore it is said, 'non intellexit;' because the father of lies favouring and suggesting, and iniquity lying to itself, man stood not in truth, but, closing his eyes to the light, remained in his blindness; thus pride impelling from himself and by himself, he is precipitated to the lowest depths, that is, to the things which delight cattle; and while he pours out all his entrails on the earth, all within himself disappears; and while breathing only after visible things, he is compared to silly beasts, though in comparison with beasts he is convicted of greater folly, and therefore to their school he is sent by the wise. 'Interroga jumenta,' says one of them, 'et docebunt te;' and another sends man negligent of salvation to the ant, that he may learn wisdom from her *." In fact it was a general observation, that from not cultivating religious feeling men gradually subside into mere animals, and that then the next step is to trample upon the pearls of the faith; so that, in consequence, after the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, one of the Papal nuncios, who was a Dominican, told the people in the Low Countries that of necessity they would all embrace the new opinions if they did not amend their lives †.

"In the lost children," saith Richard of St. Victor, "the light of the eyes faileth; for often, from the depravation of the will, the acuteness of the intelligence is clouded over. He who loses celestial desires, and involves himself in the love of earthly things, must incur the darkness of errors, and, as if from the distilled clouds of heaven, be tainted with a certain dew of seduction. The domination of vice by degrees softens the mind, and renders it constantly weaker and weaker ‡." And this, no doubt, explains the sentence of Simonides, that opi-

* Vincent Bellov. *Speculum Doctrinale*, lib. i. c. 1.

† Tournon, iii. 20.

‡ Ric. S. Victoris de *Eruditione Hominis Interioris*, i. ii. c. 26. 29.

nion violates truth : — τὸ δοκεῖν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν βιάζεται, which they should recollect who ever lay such stress upon what “seems;” for oh! what not in man deceptible and vain!

“All who are in mortal sin,” says Dionysius the Carthusian, “are rebels to light, to the uncreated light, to the holy and true God, and to the judgment of right reason*.” “Reason before sin,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “comprehended more easily and perfectly what now with great difficulty and less perfectly, and from a distance, it can see; many things also it knew then, which now it doth not know†.” Again, “Truth does not come willingly without goodness, or, if it come, it does not come from those parts and from that region where is salvation‡.” “Of necessity, while the mind is corrupted within, the intelligence is deceived in the judgment of things without§.” “But where is charity, there is brightness: ubi caritas est, claritas est||.”

“Falsehood does not arise,” says St. Augustin, “from the things themselves which deceive us, since they only show to the senses their exterior form, according to the beauty they have received; nor is it, on the other hand, the senses which lead us into error, since being affected conformably to the nature of the body to which they belong, they bring only their own affections to the soul. It is sin which deceives souls, when they seek what is true, without that truth which they abandon¶.”

“Sin is partly in the intelligence,” says the angelic doctor, “and therefore falsehood can be in the intelligence;” which St. Augustin observes, remarking that “no one who is deceived understands that in which he is deceived.” St. Bernardine of Sienna traces the ignorance and errors of men to three sources, which are all excluded where the heart is pure. He cites the words, “diminutæ sunt veritates a filiis hominum;” and adds, “plurally—to denote a triple truth,—the truth of justice, which fails by avarice—the truth of life, which fails by

* B. Dionysii Carthus. de Fonte Lucis, Præfat.

† Quest. Circ. Epist. ad Rom. i. 269.

‡ Hugo S. Vict. de Sacram. lib. ii. p. 14. c. 9.

§ Id. de Sapientia Anim. Christi, Præfat.

|| De Sacram. lib. ii. p. 13. c. 11.

¶ S. August. de Ver. Rel. 67.

luxury—and the truth of doctrine, which fails by pride *.” Hence arises the phenomenon remarked by Paschal, that there are minds excellent in all other respects, which cannot in any manner consent to certain notions, though nothing can surpass them in clearness, and though, as Savonarola says of the Catholic doctrines in general, they admit of proof which amounts to mathematical demonstration.

These facts as to the origin of error convey an important testimony to the moral purity of those ages, in which the great truths of the Catholic religion were so generally admitted and acted upon, both by nations and individuals; and we shall find them multiplied and confirmed if we proceed to reflect upon the causes which, in subsequent times, have occasioned nations and individuals to lapse into a state of ignorance respecting the same truths, or to regard them with avowed hostility. The scholastic divines distinguish the *peccatum ignorantiae* and the *peccatum ex ignorantia* †.

“There is a triple ignorance,” says the Master of the Sentences: “that of those who are unwilling to know, which is itself sin—that of those who wish to know, but cannot; which ignorance excuses, for it is not sin, but only its punishment—and that of those who merely are ignorant, which is simple ignorance, which excuses no one fully, but only so far, perchance, as to mitigate punishment ‡.” Of the first, St. Augustin speaks in these terms:—“Man with a perverse mind sometimes fears to understand, lest he should be compelled to do what he might understand §;” which ignorance is noticed by the Psalmist, also, saying, “*Noluit intelligere ut bene ageret.*”

In remarking that of this ignorance, in which clearly men of pure hearts could never be involved, we can discover comparatively but little trace during the middle ages, one must acknowledge that the generations of those times were exempt, in great measure, from the trials to which later have been exposed; for the Catholic religion was then in wondrous manner diffused, and provided

* S. Bern. Senens. Epist. 21. tom. iii.

† S. Bonavent. Declar. Termin. Theolog. op. tom. vi. p. 211.

‡ Mag. Sent. lib. ii. Distinct. 22.

§ De Verbis Apostol. sect. 13.

with means of extending through all lands the knowledge of its truth ; but when we come to speak of the ardour and affection with which that truth was explained, confirmed, and illustrated, we shall gather sufficient proof to convince us that, if by a mysterious permission of Almighty Providence, the pillar had been partially removed and the light of faith intercepted from any land, these were not the men who would have quietly resigned themselves to such a destitution, shut their eyes to the beams that might rekindle it, or taken refuge in ignorance, pretending it to be involuntary.

“Many things are unknown,” says St. Bernard, “either through negligence to know, or indolence to learn, or shame of enquiring,” but according to St. Thomas, “ignorance, which is caused by a fault, cannot excuse the subsequent fault.” As St. Augustine says, “it will not be imputed to you, as a fault, that you are ignorant ; but that you neglect to seek that of which you are ignorant*.” This is the terrible reproof to which the conduct of men, who refused to hear the holy church, has ever been obnoxious. The heathens evinced not more anxiety to learn what was really the Christian doctrine, than many of those who were separated from its authoritative teachers in latter times.

“*Hic solum humanam curiositatem torpescere*,” says Tertullian, and the experience of eighteen centuries has only confirmed the truth of his observation. “Never speak of the Pythagoreans without light,” was a Pythagorean maxim, † which might have suggested a reasonable caution to many eloquent declaimers in modern times, who could not be accused of neglecting to speak concerning that of which they were ignorant ; for when truth had retired from some lands, bestruck with slanderous darts, many loved to speak of Catholics in the dark, without knowing any thing about them. Many, too, when the Catholic religion was explained to them, acted like that Trojan of the poet, who, hearing the sentiments of the real Helen, supposing that it is only one who resembles her in person, exclaims, “your mind indeed is far different from hers. You have well said ‘May the Gods reward you,’ but may she, whom you

* De Libero Arbit. lib. iii. 19.

† Iamblich. Adhort. ad Phil. in fin.

resemble only in body, perish miserably *.” But let us hear more fully what the angelic Doctor says on this subject; “If ignorance made the involuntary, it would follow that all sin was involuntary, which is against St. Augustin, who says, ‘that all sin is voluntary.’ Ignorance,” he continues, “is threefold in relation to the will, concomitantly, consequently, and antecedently: the first is where there is ignorance in an action, yet if there were knowledge the action would still be performed; such ignorance causes not the involuntary: the second case is where ignorance itself is voluntary, and this may be in two ways, as where the will chooses ignorance, that the guilt of sin may be diminished, and this is styled affected ignorance: the other manner is where a man can and ought to know, and this is the ignorance of evil choice, from passion or habit preceding; but when such ignorance exists it does not make an act involuntary. Antecedently is ignorance, in regard to the will, where it is the cause of doing what otherwise would not be done, and such ignorance causes the involuntary †.” We must be reminded from time to time, that passages of this kind are valuable, not merely as conveying the opinion of illustrious philosophers, but as shewing what was the universal conviction of mankind, constituting in reality historical facts; for to learn what was the general opinion of men in a particular age, or the state of the public mind respecting the causes and the guilt of indifference to truth, is to be made acquainted with a fact, and one too of no small importance to the success of a philosophic study of history.

That such should have been the conviction was, indeed, but a necessary consequence of moral purity, for what could be conceived more contrary to it, than a resolution to follow every inclination of nature blindly, in order to avoid the responsibility of knowing the Creator’s will? “No excuse can be drawn from such ignorance,” says Savonarola, who seems to deny that there can exist any other kind to prevent men from embracing the Catholic faith; for he says that, “whoever, although born in a land where it was unknown, should turn to God, with the natural light of reason and

* Eurip. Helen. 160.

† S. Thom. Sum. p. 1. Q. vi. art. 8.

a pure heart, and implore him to show truth, his prayer would be heard; and either by an internal inspiration as to Job, or by angels as to Cornelius, or by an apostolic man as to the Eunuch by Philip, the necessary light would be imparted *."

Of the great intellectual result, arising from the multitude of spirits purged from sin on earth, we should form however an inadequate idea, if we confined our observation to the general desire of escaping from a state of ignorance, without extending it to the positive proofs of fervour and sincerity with which truth was invited and received. But as these have been already witnessed during the course of the preceding books, in which we have seen the predominance of faith, and the devoted love with which the Catholic religion was embraced and practised, it will be more conducive to the end of exhibiting the happy consequences of attaining to the requisite qualification for this sixth beatitude, if we turn our attention, at present, to the causes which have occasioned the rejection or abandonment of the same truth, by those who ought to consider themselves as its natural defenders; for by such contrasts effects are often clearer seen. And if it should be found that these are indeed the sharp parts of which I spoke, in the beginning, as inevitable, it must be remembered that, independent of the vital nourishment which may be drawn from them, the position of these persons is one that challenges enquiry; for as one of their own body has lately said, "Men who appropriate to themselves a title which others claimed a right to enjoy, must expect their pretensions to be subjected to a somewhat rigid scrutiny; nor are they even entitled to complain, if they incur a certain degree of obloquy and invective." Such we conceive to be the case as respects those who were pleased to assume to themselves the title of reformed Christians. Not indeed that I mean to bespeak a justification for myself, as if it were my intention to set down against them aught in malice, but, conceiving that their writings afford the most useful illustrations of the consequences which ensue from a want of that supernatural cleanness of heart, which eminently characterised Catholic generations in ages of faith, I must be permitted freely to make use of them

* *Triump. Crucis*, lib. ii. 16,

for that purpose, not contrasting such men with ourselves, since, as far as regards nature, the result might cover us with shame, but comparing them with those we follow. Nor do I feel it necessary to disclaim an intention of charging all such persons with insincerity, since the denial would rather imply that I was conscious of having harboured the idea that such an intention was possible—a weakness, to use the gentlest term, from which I feel myself free.

That any man should write otherwise than conscientiously,—I do not mean otherwise than what is generally implied by that term, for it is pretty evident that men, on ordinary occasions, can find in their consciences exactly what they please,—but otherwise than they would write or dictate if laid on the bed of death, would be incredible if we were not surrounded with things, and if we did not find within ourselves at least the seeds of things incredible, though most true. Here unhappily we are not under the necessity of insisting much upon mere presumptions. The history of these divisions, which St. Paul classes among carnal sins, which records such a succession of vain men, pursuing the changing honours of the world as giddy children who run after butterflies, heedless of the ground beneath their feet, furnishes abundant proof, that an intellectual conscience is an indication of purity of heart, which mankind, in hostility to the Catholic church, has never given.

“You must follow truth—*πάντως καὶ πάντη*,” says Plato, “or abandon all claim to the love of wisdom *,” On that condition its adversaries have done, as yet, but little to swell the list of philosophers.

Antonio Galateus, a great Catholic Physician, makes a remark which was very characteristic of the spirit of the middle ages, when even the schools seemed to be animated with the generosity and courage of that Chivalry, which was so much then in vogue, “Nor do I think it,” he says, writing to Summonti, “a less sin not to assent to truth, than not to defend truth—in defence of which so many martyrs of Christ, so many prophets, so many philosophers are dead †.”

This, I repeat it, was the spirit of that ancient Society

* De Repub. lib. vi.

† Ant. Gal. Callipolis descript. Thes. Antiq. Ital. tom. ix.

which was subject to the Catholic church. But if we turn to investigate the manners and spirit arising out of the civilization which succeeded, notwithstanding an increase of pretension, we shall find a very different state of things, yielding evidence on which it would be difficult not to believe, that a great revolution, in regard to such sentiments, had taken place. Without alluding to men resembling Strepsiades, whose sole desire really seemed to be to become masters of unjust reasoning, we find, as advocates of the new opinions, very influential personages, in whom, unquestionably, a devotedness to truth was wanting, even when they did not regard it with hostility. Many adopted, in reference to Catholics, the policy of Seneca, who, as St. Augustin remarks, "never names the Christians, not daring to speak well of them lest he should contradict the common opinion of his country, and not wishing to speak ill of them lest he should wound his own conscience*." Perhaps, however, no class of men came forward, in greater numbers, to swell the ranks of those who advocated the new philosophy in Europe, than that which was long before described by John of Salisbury. "Some there are," saith he, "who, as if imitators of the Academicians, choose from fancy rather than from reason what they follow. Whatever this man has caught up he thinks derived from the secret depths of philosophy. Prepared to contend for a tuft of wool, he thinks whatever sounds strange to his ears to be untenable. Whatever he himself advances is authentic and holy. When other men speak he contradicts them instantly, though he is oppressed with such intellectual poverty, that if you take from him one or two words he is dumb, and more silent than a statue: you would think him marble, and to have learned silence in a school of Pythagoras or a cloister of monks†." Men are not indeed to be censured for being poor, but if they attempt to deceive others by pretending riches, it is but right to put others on their guard against them.

St. Athanasius says, that the most decided of the Arian bishops did not dare to expose their real sentiments in Christian pulpits. "Cautious," he says, "in

* De Civ. Dei, vi. 11.

† De Nugis Cur. lib. vii. cap. 9.

general men of the world, they speak only in a vague and general manner of the Son of God ; and the Catholic people attach to this word a Catholic sense." St. Hilary makes the same remark, and adds, "This impious artifice of not saying what they think, is the cause why the bishops of Antichrist do not utterly destroy the Christian people, who take their expressions in the natural sense. They hear Jesus Christ called God, and they believe that he is what they call him. *Sanctiores aures populi quam corda sunt sacerdotum* *."

This passage might recall to the reader's mind other adversaries, and transport it to later times, when there were with the Christian sects, as there had been of old with the philosophers, the *βιβλία ἑξωτερικά* and the *λόγοι ἀκροατικοί*, spoken of in Alexander's letter, as also the *ἐγκύκλιοι λόγοι*, of which the Stagyrte in his *Ethics* speaks. When an intelligent observer surveyed the fair professions which were opposed with such assurance to Catholicism, and discovered that after all they were never, for the most part, any thing but a greater or less degree of that unbelief which is now styled Rationalism, and that they owed many of their most distinguished ornaments to this contrivance, his only answer to their boastful advocates might have been in the poet's words,—“O heaven ! that such resemblance of the truth should yet remain, where faith and reality remain not !” This contrast to the simplicity of the clean of heart can be discerned at an early stage of the revolution. Erasmus at first only objected to the violence of Luther. “I reserve myself,” he says, writing to him, “wholly for the work of literature ; and it seems to me that one is most likely to succeed by moderation. Thus it was that Christ acted and subdued the world ; thus did Paul abolish the Judaic religion. *Omnia trahens ad allegoriam*.” Michelet remarks, that “as the Cæsars of old in their triumph had a voice to warn them, so had Luther in his day of glory ; for in his joy he could discern the faint murmur of unbelief saying *memento mori* ; and in fact Zuingle, notwithstanding the mystical style of his writings, was a decided herald of that troop.” The same policy has been adopted in these latter days, even by a bolder race of spirits, who, after exhausting all the

* S. Hilarii cont. Auxent. c. 6.

sophisms of their Gallic leader, in order to subdue the very name of Christ, have suddenly shifted sails and steered their bark to join the hosts of those who confine their hostility to Rome, who thoughtlessly admit the new allies, as if there could be no reason to suspect a belief which shows us men detesting Christ, who also detest Antichrist.

But, passing on, let us notice in our poor humanity, separated from the living sources in which it is made pure, other indications of an unsound double heart, which in the ages of faith were much more rarely found. Amidst these hosts were many who were sometimes forced by evidence to admit the motives of credibility, and yet who refused to believe. This was not a novelty. "Pontifices et Pharisæi," says St. Augustin, "sibi consulebant, nec tamen dicebant, credamus *." "With such men," as Pelisson remarks, "the secret objection was so much the greater evil, as they never sought a remedy for it. They entered on no explanation, even within their own minds, but by a certain confused and undeveloped idea fancied themselves secure; but incredulity," adds this philosopher, "excuses no one before God, nor should it before men, until the question has been decided by a deep and mature deliberation of the grounds for believing or for not believing †." Their interior stains were manifest, therefore, by their neglecting to engage in such deliberations, notwithstanding the peculiarity of their position, which made them of absolute obligation. The words of Cotta to Velleus were applicable to them:—"Vestra solum legitis; vestra amatis: cæteros causâ incognitâ condemnatis ‡;" so that one might address them in the style of Socrates, and say, alluding to the promises of which they are so bountiful, "O happy men of wondrous nature, who can accomplish such a work so easily! Your words indeed are admirable in many respects, but in this above all others transcendental,—that you make no account of many men who are venerable and esteemed not a little, but only of such as are like yourselves §."

* Tract. xlix. in Joan.

† Pelisson, *Réflexions sur les Differends de la Religion*, sect. iv.

‡ De Nat. Deorum.

§ Plato, *Euthydem*.

If, indeed, there be any book by Catholics inconsiderately written and condemned by authority, any extravagant legend, any base concession, like a traitorous deliverance of the towers of the celestial city,—that they read with greediness, and then laid claim to impartiality; but, as Cardan remarks, “It did not excuse Pilate when he said, ‘Tui te mihi tradiderunt,’ for he ought to have inquired into the truth, and discharged the office of a just judge.” In the time of James I. the new teachers shunned any discussion with the old, though Walsingham says they used to boast that none appeared to argue with them, when in fact none were permitted *. At present, undoubtedly, we hear of public disputations before a select audience, but it is only to remind one of the sophist Protagoras saying to Socrates, “It will be sweet to discourse concerning these things, in presence of these persons who are here with me;” when the sage perceived at once that his sole desire was to show off his abilities before Prodicus and Hippias, that is, to provide for gaining more money †. How sweet is it for many thus, before chosen auditors, to hold up infidels and persecutors of the church, like John of England, as representatives of its faith—how sweet to discourse concerning the baneful influence of Romanism, visible in men who in their hearts detested Rome, and were its bitterest enemies—how sweet to repeat all that Middleton and Robertson and others of that school have written, having the rich and credulous for hearers, who think their national glory must for ever set if there should be lack of contributions to the speaker’s fund! Truly, when thus challenged, the Catholic should reply in the words of Æschylus, to one who said, “But you?—what do you wish to answer?”—

Ἐβουλόμην μὲν οὐκ ἐρίζειν ἐνθάδε.
Οὐκ ἐξ ἴσου γὰρ ἐστὶν ἁγῶν νῶν. ‡

The wishing to discourse before a multitude of such men, he might continue, in the words of Plato, “seems to me as a thing justly reprehensible §.” St. Augustin sug-

* Search, &c. p. 2.

† Plato, Protag.

‡ Ranæ.

§ Plato, Euthydemus.

gests the only rational method, saying, "Lay aside the study of parties, and seek the grace, not of conquering, but of finding truth *."

A disingenuous use of erudition is a symptom of interior disease, from which the adversaries of the Catholic Church have at no time been wholly free. Chrysippus, the most cunning interpreter of the dreams of the stoics, as Cicero calls him, attempted, in the second book of his treatise, *De Natura Deorum*, to accommodate the fables of Orpheus, Musæus, Hesiod, and Homer to the things which he had laid down in the first concerning the gods, —*ut etiam veterrimi poëtæ, qui hæc ne suspicati quidem sint, Stoici fuisse videantur* †. One is forcibly reminded, by this passage, of the literary curiosities presented by modern writers, who show, with a great Prussian historian, St. Boniface protecting the Church of Germany from the tyranny of Rome, and with an English historian of the Anglo-Saxons, how early the corruptions of Rome began to infect the English Church—for by that admission he thinks to explain away the fact of its Catholicity—and with another distinguished writer of our country, Sir Thomas More, discoursing, like an Anglican minister, in a London clubhouse. Such is the learning, whether conveyed in a *Grandfather's Tales*, or in the more pretentious volumes of a *Family Library*, which the watchmen of the reformed camp proclaim to be the one only cure for "the melancholy and dangerous spirit which leads the vast majority of their host to 'doubt whether they ought to convert Catholics or be converted themselves.' " That it is incompatible with purity of heart even to make choice of such representations as the best sources of information on the subject in debate, is an assertion which implies, I conceive, nothing uncharitable; for, as St. Augustin says, "What can be more full of temerity than to inquire concerning the sense of books from those who, in consequence of some secret impelling cause or other, have declared war against the writers and authors of those books ‡?"

If St. Theresa could say, "We do not live in times in which we can attach faith to all kinds of persons, but

* De Mor. Manich. c. 3. n. 5.

† Cicero de Nat. Deorum, i. 15.

‡ De Util. Cred. c. vi.

only to those who conform their lives to the life of Jesus Christ," no one in these days, assuredly, has any just ground to consider himself injured, if he should hear his contemporaries similarly admonished.

The prodigious power of prejudice, which so often reduces the best understandings to a level with the most imbecile, has been employed from the earliest times against the Catholic Church; and this must certainly be traced from the intricacies and defilements of the human heart. How could the judgment be the original offender here?

Truly it falleth out with these Catholic haters as with the good women spoken of by Sidney, who are often sick, but in faith they cannot tell where: so the name of Catholic or Roman is odious to them, though neither its cause nor effects, neither the sum that contains it nor the particularities descending from it, give any fast handle to their carping dispraise. This is an evil to which even the history of old philosophy shows that our nature has been always liable.

Socrates, in his Apology, expresses a greater fear of the ancient calumnious reports, which had been long propagated among the people respecting him, than of the specific charge brought against him by Anytus, however dreadful that might be. "These, O men!" he says, "are far more formidable, which have persuaded most of you from your childhood to believe these false charges against me,—such as that there was a certain Socrates, a sophist and vain speculator, making the worst cause appear the best;—these reports, O Athenians! these reports are the accusers that I have most reason to dread. They are many in number, and they have long been actively employed against me, addressing themselves to you in that age when you were least able to refute them, being boys and youths; while there was no one to stand up in my defence. Therefore I have two sets of accusers—the one comprising these men who now bring a specific charge against me; the other, those who have long since been accusing me: and I am old and slow in speech, but my accusers are indefatigable and active through the energy of evil—οἱ δ' ἐμοὶ κατήγοροι ἅτε δεινοὶ καὶ ὀξεῖοι ὄντες ὑπὸ τοῦ θάττονος τῆς κακίας *."

* Plato, Apol. 39.

The contest between the Catholic Church and her adversaries could not be more faithfully described than in these words. Such are, in fact, the two sets of her accusers, both adopting courses that indicate the blot of sin in hearts not purged away. In general, their rule seems to be to accuse, without stopping to examine on what ground they accuse: so it pleaseth them to take things not conceded, and to make of them what they wish. Then we hear them cry out indignantly, saying, that every thing is contaminated with the demon's touch, and that what we treasure most is a curse to ourselves and to all other men; but 'tis they "who, lost in stormy visions, keep with phantoms an unprofitable strife, and in mad trance strike with their spirit's knife invulnerable nothings."

St. Augustin says, "that men being inclined to condemn whatever is contrary to the custom of their age and country, and to approve of nothing but what is according to it, it follows, that if any thing in the Scripture should be foreign to the custom of the hearers, they forthwith set that down as a figured locution. So, if the opinion of error should preoccupy the mind, whatever the Scripture may assert in contradiction to it is thought to be figurative *. But the Scripture," he adds, "prescribes only charity, and condemns only cupidity, and in that way forms the manners of men." Charity would thus correct the judgment. We are, therefore, again obliged to descend to the heart to find the seat of the evil. If there had been felt there the purifying influence of love, men would not thus cling to the slightest obstacle and rest content, as we find so many do, with the force of such negative arguments as would never for an instant delay them in their temporal speculations. Thus, because St. Polycarp, writing upon other matters, does not mention that supremacy of Rome which his disciple, St. Irenæus, combating the heretics, speaks of as a thing unquestioned, therefore some conclude it cannot be proved as old as the apostolic age.

Every flimsy conceit of this kind is then received as a heaven-descended shield, which can be produced, they think, like that made by Vulcan, φοβήμεναι ἐξ φόβου ἀνδρῶν: though, as Bossuet said of a reply by Claude, "It would

* De Doct. Christ. lib. iii. cap. 10.

be better to give no answer to us at all, than such an answer." On the other hand, in thus tracing prejudice to its source, it would be inhuman to press hard upon those afflicted with it, as if it were an evil not to be acquired without pains, when it is obviously the predominant malady of our common nature, which nothing can remove but the supernatural purity of heart, which confers beatitude. Above all, when it is promoted by the instructions of youth, there is ground for commiseration. On purely rational grounds no one has a right to expect argument to avail against the force of education and example ; few can surmount such difficulties : "*Magni est ingenii revocare mentem a sensibus et cogitationem ab consuetudine abducere.*" As the poet saith, "Custom maketh blind and obdurate the loftiest hearts."

"Beware," said Socrates, to one who was about applying to Protagoras for lessons, "how you play at chances for the dearest interests belonging to you ; for there is more danger in purchasing instruction than food or drink for the body. Food or drink purchased from the dealer can be tried before it enters your mouth, and you can determine what is to be eaten or drunk and what not, and how and where it should be received,—so here there is no danger ; but lessons of instruction cannot be proved first by pouring them into a vessel, but, having once received instructions into the soul, one must depart either injured or benefitted *."

There was, however, at the first, and there will continue to be to the end of time, an especial source of hostility to the Catholic religion, which indicates interior impurity of a far deeper dye than that which leads to the dominion of ordinary prejudice. The influence of the passions and of the affections upon the judgment was so fully discerned by the ancient philosopher, that we are told his supplications to Heaven were limited to a prayer that he might be fair within ; and in fact, where the heart is given not to God, but to creatures—where the habit is acquired of seeking exterior consolations, and of contracting attachments to things of earth, there can be no dependance upon the acutest intelligence. To the men who embraced the new opinions in the sixteenth

* Plato, Protagoras.

century, might have been addressed the poet's admonition:—

“ You have known better lights and guides than these :
 Ah ! let not aught amiss within dispose
 A noble mind to practise on herself,
 And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
 Of passion ————.”

The moral restraints of the Catholic Religion, and her correcting hand, are more than sufficient to shut out her truth from passion's slave, and him who still to worth has been a willing stranger. Mariana, speaking of Carilla, Archbishop of Toledo, who reproved Don Pedro the Cruel for his debaucheries, and who was hated by him on that account, says that his reasons for hating the archbishop were so much the stronger as they were unjust: *odii causæ acriores, quia iniquæ* *. The religion cannot be loved of which the minister incurs such hate from complying with its requisitions.

The great characteristics of men who oppose it on this ground are not those of Plato's philosopher, “a hatred of falsehood and a love of truth †,” but a hatred of what is not habitual and pleasing to them—of what is not associated with ideas that inspire self-esteem, and a love of what custom, domestic interests, and the innumerable bonds of the world have made dear to them. Such lovers of glory, as Plato would call them, are very angry if we only mention the name of authors who have written to prove the truth of the Catholic religion: “We feel no inclination to look into them,” they say, with an expression of contempt,—nay, like Epicurus, they are ready to make war against dialectics, and deny the sense of the words, either yes or no, thinking to be acute too; though Cicero asks, in allusion to such reasoners, “*Quo quid dici potest obtusius?*” ’Tis passion hangs these weights upon their tongue. But what is this, unless being angry with truth? And how stained must be the heart in which such aversion dwelleth!

Whoever attempts to recommend it must then expect to hear such words as Paris addressed to Antenor, “do not persist in saying to me that this creed is true, for it pleaseth me not.”

* Lib. xvi. c. 18.

† De Repub. lib. vi.

—σὺ μὲν οὐκέτ' ἐμοὶ φίλα ταῦτ' ἀγορεύεις*
οἷσθα καὶ ἄλλον μῦθον ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοῆσαι*.

Indeed, if you will hear men, of deep mysterious vision into the secrets of the spiritual world, you will be inclined to think that the implacable hatred, which some in different ages have evinced against this holy cause, could only be accounted for by tracing it to a certain instinct, which tells them, as St. Anselm says, “that the consummation of the saints will be to such as perish interminable grief and everlasting ruin.” Doubtless, ancient poets say with more truth than is often imagined, “that the crimes of ancestors cause men to experience the enmity of the avenging ministers of Heaven.” How else can one explain the language that now finds favour among men of noble descent, and in every other respect, of gentle manners? 'tis like the drops from the heart of the Furies bearing death to mortals. Who will appease the bitter strength of the black wave? But every where the mists are gathering between truth, and all but the clean of heart. Where nations have been separated, the very affections of nature interpose, as they did in the first age of the Church. St. Clement of Alexandria met the difficulty in this manner. You say “it is not well and honourable to turn aside from the custom of our fathers. Why, then,” he adds, “do you not continue to use the nurse’s milk to which they first accustomed you? why do you increase or diminish the substance they left you? If they left you an evil and Atheistic custom of life, why should you not seek the truth, and your real true Father †? Where the heart is not purified by humility, wisdom herself becomes an obstacle, and men conclude that their position without the Church, verifies the maxim of Cardan, that it is sometimes better to persist in a bad choice than afterwards to vary one’s course by choosing a better ‡. Though Homer would suffice to convict them of error in following it, since he makes a heavenly tongue declare, that the minds of the good can be converted; στρεπταὶ μὲν τε φρένες ἐσθλῶν §.

Nor is this all; for the mind is blinded to the light of truth, oftener, perhaps, by regarding the dazzling bright-

* II. VII. 357.

† Protrepticus, c. x.

‡ De Vita propria, lib. 1. c. xi. § II. XV. 213.

ness of its own virtues, than by involving itself in the clouds of vice. Men of the best and sweetest natures engage in holy offices of charity and instruction, in emulation of what they read in Catholic books, and the very zeal and energy with which they pursue them, may, unknown to themselves, be in exact proportion to the depth of the secret wound, which the fiery dart of truth may have inflicted on their conscience, at some former period of their lives, and they remember it not. It is sad to return to treat grosser and more vulgar stains, but one cannot overlook the instance remarked by our own poet, where he says, that "gold is poison to men's souls, doing more murders in this loathsome world." This, beyond all doubt, it is, which often clouds the brow whenever the serene light of truth is perceived breaking in from a distance. When the interior blot remains untouched, it avails but little to remind men of their soul. "Riches are a soul to wretched mortals," said the oldest poet of the Greeks*. Hence the fog doth often rise to vitiate the spirit's beam; this the holy Bernard knew, and therefore he writes in these terms to Gillebert, Bishop of London, commending his spirit of poverty. Avarice is dead; to whom is not such a word sweet? How truly wise must you be who have destroyed the greatest enemy of wisdom? Truly this is worthy of your priesthood, and of your name. It was right that you should confirm your eminent philosophy by this testimony, to furnish this compliment to your long studies. It was not a great thing for Master Gillebert to become a Bishop; but for a Bishop of London to live like a poor man, this is clearly magnificent†. We read in the life of St. John Climacus, that he not being held by affection for any thing mortal, but nourished only by the sense of eternal things, escaped free from noxious sadness. Pride, ambition, and the love of pleasure, are the chief sources of intellectual blindness, so that Christ struck at the root of the cursed tree of false knowledge, when he said, "*siquis vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum et tollat crucem suam.*" Witness those lovers of pleasure, of whom St. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks. "Let them take up their cross," he says, "and

* Hesiod, Op. et Dies.

† S. Bernardi Epist. xxiv.

they will cease to be Atheists under the name of philosophers*.

Only let this divine precept be obeyed; and no class of men, in order to win the world's praise, or led away by a love of singularity, to forsake the Catholic form of sound words, will be heard, uttering crude and unauthorized fancies, recklessly scattering the seeds of presumptuousness and delusion: men, who, as far as their meaning can be distinguished from that of Catholic divines and moralists, hold nothing peculiar to themselves, on the great doctrines of redemption, unless indeed they hold what is absurd and pestilential, will not then pretend to be the reformed, or the sole depositories of evangelical truth: but, on the contrary, every tongue will repeat St. Augustine's words, "there can be no just necessity for breaking unity:" then we shall hear no more of professed teachers of truth, coming with deep premeditated lines, with written pamphlets, studiously devised to accuse any set of men in mass, without hearing them, without studying the cause of their position in society, or knowing what are their sentiments, and defaming them by categories, extolling the wisdom and the institutions of the ancient Catholic society, and with the same breath denouncing those who follow that wisdom, and who would perpetuate those institutions, in their true spirit, as a perfidious faction, which must be either converted to the modern creed, or conquered with the sword; turning the sails of their speech thus to every wind, after the manner of Jewell, and those other counsellors, whose arts detected, caused the first doubts to Francis Walsingham,—at one time dogmatising and bearing testimony against the Church, like that which the Jews bore against her Divine Founder, which did not agree together: hoping to convict of crime that Church which Truth itself declared, should be purified so as to have neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, at another adopting the style of the Academicians, who doubt of all things, and know nothing, demanding, what is truth? Where is truth between these opinions?

St. Bernard does not treat this wound without applying the knife deeply. "Why, O Pilate," he exclaims,

* Stromat. lib. i. c. 11.

“dost thou interrogate the Lord aside, that he should whisper to thee what is truth? Does it concern thee? That which is holy must not be cast to dogs. Seek rather to taste faith, but ask not in the interim for what satiates the intelligence*.” This indeed is stern language, but, on the whole, such a complaint, and even such a prayer from men who seek not things, but the search of things, not the truth but the examination, deserve no other answer. As for the declaration, that they cannot return to the house of unity, such a defence involves too many contradictions to be of the least avail.

“Philosophy,” says Novalis, “is wholly depending on the will. What I will, that I can.”

But to others, who ask for truth with humility and sincerity, the constant reply of the Catholic church might have been expressed in the verse of Sophocles:

——— τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον
ἀλωτόν· ἐκφεύγει δὲ τάμελούμενον †.

for within the range of necessary truths, one may truly say with the Roman poet, “Nihil tam difficile est quin quærendo investigari possit.”

As for that opinion, ascribed by Varro to the new Academics, that all things are uncertain, “The city of God,” saith St. Augustin, “detests such a doubt as madness, for however its soul may be oppressed by the body, so that it can only know in part, yet of the things which it comprehends in mind and reason, it has a most certain knowledge †.”

Yes assuredly the teachers of the ancient wisdom would say, if they could observe what now takes place on earth, “Let men restore the old roodloft of their churches, with a view to its symbolic sense, and we shall soon hear that the adorable sacrifice of the mass is again offered upon their altars. Only let them take up their Redeemer’s cross in practice, and every thing will return to its pristine beauty. For after all, the best answer that could be given to their objections, by one who loved the men, and horribly spotted is the heart which loveth them not, would be to show them a crucifix. The deep

* De divers. Serm. xv. † Æd. Tyr. 110.

† De Civ. Dei, lib. xix. 18.

scholastics would adduce it as their most forcible, most subtle, most profound argument: for what, they would ask, can resist the speechless lesson contained in this great symbol of the whole Catholic doctrine? Come, methinks I hear them say, let us hear why they remain aloof from us. What do they think of the judgment of this world?—Show them the crucifix. What of penance and mortification?—Show them the crucifix. What of riches and advancement, and a life devoted to subtle ambition?—Show them the crucifix. What of the wisdom of this world?—Show them the crucifix. What of obedience, involving the submission of their own will to the unsearchable commands of Almighty God?—Show them the crucifix. What of the pride which leads them perhaps to justify, under the cloak of a more evangelical religion, their own absurd and dangerous depreciation of morality, and to neglect the duty of humility, and gentleness, and patience, under insult and injury, and all the rude buffetings of the world?—Show them the crucifix. Yet, what in the days of Scot and Thomas could hardly be conceived, is there something that can resist even this. Need I add, that it is the heart in which the modern philosophy, under any form or title, can have sway. There it will fail; for, as a deep observer has remarked, one who, through a long life, has watched it narrowly, that “philosophy, and I know not what habit it may not sometimes assume, is vain in its thoughts and proud in its discourse. It has the pride of the Stoics, and the license of Epicurus; it has its sceptics, its Pyrrhoniens, its eclectics; and the only doctrine which it has not embraced is that of privation*.”

If the judgment of those who delivered over the deposit of faith to the disputations of men, had been really unshackled, the error would not have lasted a single day. Had those who came after them been content to begin with doubts, as they were bound to do by their own principles, they would not have been slow to end in certainties; for the ingenuity of truth is such, that, where she gets a free and willing hand, she opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her. Remark the complaints of Milton, “of the unavoidable dangers of unlimited controversial reading,”

* Bonald.

where he says, "how many of our priests and doctors have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists, and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad *," a complaint repeated lately by one invested with such authority as the Anglican opinions could confer, who affectionately recommended a disciple to cease from examining the books of Catholics, alleging for reason, that he had never known any one to indulge in such curiosity who did not end by adopting their creed.

And here I would remark that a great advantage of studying the works of Plato, consists in the facility which it gives of detecting the intricate windings of the passions, and of dissolving the complicated ties in which they shroud the understanding. All men are sophists with the exception of the clean of heart, and many, who with subtilty attack sophists, are themselves but of their college; and it is well to have this fact attested and explained by so clear and unimpeachable a witness. Nevertheless, without having read Plato, the instinct of the holy race would often detect fallacies, where the understanding of the prudent might otherwise have been imposed upon, proving itself a still more secure guide in speculation, as well as in life and manners; for we find, as Cardan remarks, "that with many men, there is nothing so vile or flagitious, which will not admit of defence or palliation †." Socrates has to oppose a sophist, who can prove, by clear and admirable reasoning, that he may and should pursue his own father before a court of justice ‡, and clearly the instinct above mentioned, is not predominant among those who demonstrate the wisdom and necessity of resisting the church their mother, or congenial with that muse which falls into ecstasy, as Gilbert says, at the bare sound of unmasking priests, styling vain, ambitious, and absurd, what the holy and the pure call virtue.

It is a just remark of Quintilian, "that it is as much easier to accuse than to defend, as it is to inflict than to cure a wound †;" but if men perish through the seduc-

* Of Unlicenced Printing.

† Cardani de Sapientia, lib. v.

‡ Plat. Euthryphro.

§ Lib. v. 13.

tions of iniquity, it is because their hearts, by sin, were wounded, and with the dulcet charity of truth had not been made whole.

One may observe too, that truth was sometimes on the tongue, without enabling any one to conclude from it that the heart had been made supernaturally clean. Thus, for instance, truth was sometimes on the lips of men who sought to possess themselves of what they envied in the Catholic church, by means which they quaintly termed underpinning the people's faith: but it was evident that the fountain of truth was not the sole source from which they drew inspiration, since they were contradicting themselves at almost every word. Indeed, to Catholic ears, their resolution to imitate what they termed the policy of Rome, with their parenthetical comment that it is undoubtedly successful, sounded like nothing but the language ascribed to the father of lies, in the old legends, which represent the demon, in order to ensnare more souls, mimicking the church of God. Truth was often heard announced by men who attacked Catholics, using against them their own arguments ready provided, adopting in their polemics the policy of Gylippus, "that famous general of Sparta who, in building the wall that was to effect the deliverance of Syracuse, made use of the very stones which the Athenians had prepared to secure its capture and destruction *."

Oh how wisely and beautifully do eloquent men discourse, when truth and their own interest or affection may be conjoined, without any material or intellectual sacrifice on their part! How every thing is then represented in its natural light, yea with what exact and subtle penetration are all the exquisite harmonies of the Catholic philosophy developed. What doctor of the church could write better on justice, order, unity, obedience, gratitude, prudence? Nothing is wanting. You have a distinct recognition of the duty of adhering to the object and specific terms of original charters, and to the real particular intention of founders—and of respecting the oaths constructed by them. You have a demonstration of the value of incorporations—the recognition of their rights, duties, and personality—of the necessity of authority in matters of faith—of revering the wisdom of

* Thucyd. lib. vii. 5.

past ages—of the character of the church, as intended to guard and transmit a certain deposit of truths. You have even a recognition that the principle of private masses in Catholic worship, was holy and divine. But what skills it to speak catholically, if men do not speak consistently?—To talk of fulfilling to the letter the object of founders, when, if they were to do so, they would have to resign all that they possess? Who can be moved at their complaint of the decay of humility and obedience, when he knows that if they had ever evinced one or the other, their system would have been, from that moment, at an end? Where is the advantage from now saying, yes, yes, when they began by a climax of negations?—saying no, first to their brethren, then to their rulers, then to the pastors of the church, then, when he condemned them, to Christ's vicar? Of what avail, in short, are all the truths they utter, all these wise Catholic axioms so fluent on their lips, unless to convey the solemn condemnation of their own system from its infancy? As philosophers, at least, they cannot come forward without unpardonable effrontery; for every system in general, whatever be its nature, must follow its own principles, good or bad; otherwise no one should condescend to listen to it, since it destroys itself, as a syllogism which would deny in the conclusion what it had established in the first or second proposition. This single consideration may convert, in an instant, the most beautiful compositions into a tissue of absurdity. In support of the new systems, men were sent forth more ingenious and powerful than Dædalus, who, as Socrates would say, could make their ideas not only move, but even describe a circle*. But such skill belonged not to the clean of heart.

Surely there must have been something very wrong in the interior, when minds could acquiesce in the most contradictory propositions, and suppose that it was an enlightened and reformed state of Christian belief to adopt a system like that Academic philosophy which embraced all the most opposite opinions, and which Cicero therefore calls the philosophy *τὴν ἄνω κάτω*. One cannot observe the aspect of literature at the present day without being converted to Plato's opinion, that "the

* Plato, Euthyphr.

soul, to pursue philosophy, must of necessity possess not alone memory, the ability to learn, grandeur, elegance, and grace, but also the love of truth and a certain affinity to truth, as well as a love of justice, courage, and temperance *."

The experience of the schools continues to prove that from the study of philosophy by degraded natures there can be, as he says, nothing good expected. "When minds unworthy of instruction apply to it, what thoughts and opinions," he asks, "do you suppose will proceed from them? Will they not be sophisms, and whatever is opposed to legitimate conclusions, and unworthy of those who possess true wisdom †?" The holy fathers and the schoolmen never supposed that truth was unconcerned with ethics, and that the intelligence could succeed while the heart was without discipline. They only say, "Easily does the holy and divine consort with what is related to it in the soul, and through a certain familiar light does the mystic ray descend upon man ‡." "To those alone who seek the truth through love does the light shine §."

All perturbations of mind are called diseases by the ancient philosophers, who teach that soundness of mind consists in a certain tranquillity and constancy ||; and where this tranquillity and constancy, this love of truth and justice, are not found, it is in vain that truth be even found. Then, as St. Ambrose saith, "men are quick to superstitions, but slow to things divine; they have eyes, and see not; they move in darkness; while they think that they fly with subtle words, they are only disturbed like bats at the splendour of true light ¶."

Little boots it to bring arguments to men like Swift, who insult the faith of Catholics after the manner of Dionysius, adding impious jests to robbery and sacrilege. As Michelet observes, both Eck and Cochleus were men of great ability; but what could their talents avail against the ridicule of Luther, who smote the Church and derided her, like those who struck her Divine Founder on the face, saying, Prophetiza nobis, Christe, quis est qui te percussit? Ridicule was in the order of that day.

* De Repub. lib. vi.

† De Repub. vi.

‡ S. Clem. Stromat. lib. vii.

§ Id. lib. vi. 15.

|| Cicero, Tusc. iii. 9.

¶ S. Amb. Serm. XLIII.

What, said the prudent, can be expected from the logic of the clean of heart, at a time when twenty thousand copies of the mocking colloquies of Erasmus (who, by the way, was the Voltaire of the sixteenth century) are sold in twelve hours? It is for them to be silent while the laugh goes round, for which the world ere long a world of tears must weep.

It is not, surely, a breach of charity to affirm, that if the adversaries of the Church had been in the number of the clean of heart, they would not have fought against her with rumours, rushing forwards with a Trojan clamour resembling the cry of birds when she demanded reasons from them; their discourse would not always have steered clear of certain topics, passing on one side, and involving itself in obscurity, in order not to move and meet fairly certain questions, as Socrates says, *παρεξιώντος καὶ παρακαλυπτομένου τοῦ λόγου, πεφοβημένου κινεῖν τὸ νῦν παρόν*. They would not have sought to escape from those who asked them to give a reason of their innovations, by riding over them, as Æschylus says, as if with a furious horse, crying out popery, like the giant which Dante saw in hell, that shouted *Baï ameth sabi almi*—no sweeter hymns becoming his fierce lips. Above all, such wrath would be far from the noble mind, and never would it have been witnessed on the tongue of such men as Milton, where, notwithstanding, whenever the name of Catholic occurs, it is invariably found, indicating assuredly some terrible disorder at the core; for a consciousness of truth, even in the vulgar heart, produces a great calm. They would not have assumed the privilege of grammarians (and what Cardan says is only allowable in their contests), have inveighed against others with rustic insolence, and indulged in personal invective. Such, however, is the constant phenomenon presented in this contest, in which men of vast intelligence, not profiting by the grace of God to embrace the Catholic religion, are seen lashed into a fury against that which they know must be the truth. In short, they would not have shown so much regard to these hereditary imputations, of which, as Johnson says, “No man sees the justice till it becomes his interest to see it; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by wil-

lingness to credit than ability to prove them." Impressions of such a nature would never have gained admittance where clouds had not risen from within to shroud in darkness the understanding. Men whose hearts were pure would have attended to the cautions so repeatedly given by the old teachers, to beware of deceiving an opponent with dialectic syllogisms and the sophisms of false conclusions*. They would not have been content with *ex parte* statements for a foundation, but would have said with Minerva in the Eumenides,—

Δνοῖν παρόντων, ἡμῖνς λόγος πάρα' †.

Truly, in affirming that it is otherwise with them, I speak not without having had means of observation. I have read many eloquent, and, if you will, masterly and "adamantine" treatises, composed with a view to prove the truth of the new opinions in religion; but I could never bear a higher testimony to any one of them than that which is given by Cicero respecting the speech of Lucullus: "*Me oratio Luculli de ipsa re ita movit, ut docti hominis, et copiosi, et parati, et nihil prætereuntis eorum quæ pro illa causa dici possent; non tamen ut ei respondere posse diffiderem.*"

To talk of answering them, however, generally speaking, argued but little experience or but slight discernment. Ages have only, in succession, verified the truth of what St. Clement of Alexandria says, that "all heresy at the beginning has ears to hear not what is proper for it to hear, but only such things as minister to pleasure‡." The words of the Roman philosopher seem as if they had been expressly written to describe those who profess it: "I know not in what manner the majority of them would rather err and defend with pugnacity the opinions which they love, than receive without obstinacy what may be consistently advanced§."

At the epoch of the great religious revolution, it was well known that the majority of printers and booksellers were determined to favour Luther. They printed the Catholic replies so barbarously that it was difficult to read them, while of the Lutheran they gave beautiful

* Isidori Etymolog. lib. ii. 7.

† 428.

‡ Stromat. lib. vii. c. 16.

§ Lucullus.

editions. The booksellers too spared no pains to facilitate the sale of each new pamphlet, directed against the Church, and at the same time threw every difficulty in the way of propagating those written in its defence. Clearly such arts were arguments of weakness, and gave proof of no advance in that freedom of opinion, which springs from purity of heart, though intellectual emancipation was emblazoned on the new banners. To liberators of this kind, the defenders of truth might have replied. These after all are not your opinions; it is not you that are interested for, as St. Augustin says, "what is so little yours as yourself, if it depend on another, that you are what you are?" "quid tam non tuum quam tu si alicujus est quod es *?" for, in short, to hasten from this cruel spectacle, was it not a fact visible to every one, who was not deliberately blind, that the innovators in few instances were masters of their own opinions? What so little belonging to them as their own intelligence? The judgment of one belongs to a king, whose ruling passion it is to compose a new religion for his subjects, with as close adherence to antiquity as is possible without divine faith and submission to the holy see; that of another depends upon a circle of learned and acute men. Many belong wholly to their friends and relations, and some to all the world; for what liberty has the poor intelligence, when the only beatitude which the heart desires, is the ability to say with Creon,

νῦν πᾶσι χαίρω, νῦν με πᾶς ἀσπάζεται †.

To have treated therefore with discretion persons separated from Catholic unity, the first question should have been that which Truth itself proposed, "quem quæritis?" The point to determine was, not what they believed (the majority were ready to believe any thing), but what they loved; consequently it was unnecessary to inquire respecting what they had read or seen, for they might have read every thing and seen every thing, without being the better qualified to assist at a free discussion. The first, and indeed sole object of investigation should have been the state of the heart; if that were not clean, the intelligence was not free, and it was useless to proceed. They more needed the divine than the logician:

* 1 Tract. 29, in Joan.

† Soph. Œd. Tyr. 595.

the latter could do nothing, "*nihil enim facile persuadetur invitis* *."

When a man of faith beheld the contest of those who wanted that light—contest deplorable, and without even human glory, reminding him of the Homeric lines :

*ἔνθα δ' ἄμ' οἰμωγή τε καὶ εὐχολὴ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν,
ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων†.*

Though he were ever such a skilled antagonist, he naturally and justly expressed reluctance to engage in it ; but such sentiments in him arose not from distrust, for he might have used the great Dante's words, and said,

"—— The anguish of that race below,
With pity stains my cheek,
Which thou for fear mistakest."

But the prospects of success were different when other assistance was called in; for it was impossible to say what might not result from hearing the divine, meek and persuasive, who had made the purification of human hearts his study, when, in the manner prescribed by Richard, of St. Victor, he would say, "whatever you desire in the world, whatever in it you fear to lose, give it up willingly, for freedom of heart. Having bought a field, dig deep, as those who search for a treasure: but, alas ! whence shall I get this gold and silver ? to dig I am not able ; to beg, I am ashamed. I know what I will do. I will go to my Father, the Father of mercies, from whom is every good and perfect gift, who gives to all abundantly and spareth not. I will pour forth my prayer in his sight, and I will disclose my poverty before him, and I will say to him, Lord, thou knowest my folly, and my substance is as nothing before thee. Grant me understanding that I may have the gold of true riches ‡."

Socrates, after shewing the error of certain men, who pretended to superior wisdom, who being in the third degree removed from truth, sought to be regarded as first, concludes with this reflection, "nevertheless, we must forgive them for having this pretension, and not reprove them," for we should love every man who says, "that he makes any account of wisdom, and manfully

* Quintil. lib. iv. 3.

† Il. VIII. 64.

‡ Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. 1. lib. iii. c. 5.

exerts himself to obtain it *.” Such was the conclusion to which Catholic philosophers came, when they had been obliged to institute investigations of this painful nature; they made them, with hurried step, as passing through a sad but necessary ordeal, and hastened on to show with St. Bonaventura, “to those who loved wisdom, and who exerted themselves to obtain it.” How by the gift of piety, the spiritual day which disperses before it all these clouds and deceitful shadows proceeds, and is consummated in the world of the soul.

The ancient philosophers discerned the need of some fresh illumination to dispel the darkness of human hearts, and Plato proceeds on one occasion to show, in what manner any one might lead men, so involved, to light? “as some,” he says, “are reported to have been conducted from Hades to the gods; which,” he adds, “would be not by the turning round of a shell, as in the vote by ostracism; but by turning round the soul from a nocturnal state to the true returning road of reality, which is that of philosophy.” “Therefore,” he concludes, “we must seek what kind of learning has this power, or what is the instruction which can draw the soul from what is generated to what has existence in itself;” ἀπὸ τοῦ γιγνομένου ἐπὶ τὸ ὄν †. These intellectual obscurities were not identified by the philosophers of the ages of faith, with any particular position in regard to truth; for they knew that more or less they encompass all men who are not divinely drawn within the radiance of its everlasting beams.

In all studies, not alone divine, but human and secular, the teachers of Catholic wisdom acknowledged two great luminaries to enlighten the intelligence,—the greater the love of God, and the less the love of their neighbour. ‡ “The light of his countenance,” says Hugo, of St. Victor, “is signed upon us all by nature, which is common to all; but joy is given to the heart of individuals by grace, which is imparted to us one by one §.

“Since the rising of the corporal sun upon the earth makes corporal day, during which men have to labour in

* Euthydemus.

† De Repub. vii.

‡ Ermenrici Monach. Angiensis de Grammatica, apud Mabil. vet. Analect. 420.

§ Annot. Elucid. in Ps. c. 5.

their corporal works, for the necessities of the body, how much more," saith Bonaventura, "must the presence of the eternal sun, the Holy Ghost, cause a spiritual day in the human soul, in which all spiritual works must be accomplished for the relief of spiritual wants." It is to be observed also, that as in the external day, there are three hours distinguished—the morning, noon, and evening; so in the spiritual day of piety there are three hours distinguished: the morning, which is the beginning of piety shining upon its own subject; the noon, which is the fervour of piety shining to the divine worship; and the evening, which is the inclination of piety to our neighbour.

At first, therefore, the gift of piety shining from the eternal sun, like a certain dawn and commencement of spiritual light, begins the day in the soul. "*Pie agentibus dabit Dominus sapientiam,*" as it is said in Ecclesiasticus, "and wisdom is the inextinguishable light of piety; and the more that piety is exercised, the more will the light of wisdom be given, till it increases to the perfect day." Similarly the work of impiety diminishes the light of piety in the mind, and produces darkness. Whence it is said in the Proverbs, "the path of the just is as the shining light which proceeds and increases to the perfect day." The gift of piety in this its first hour inclines man to have compassion upon himself, and makes him consider how miserable will be his soul if it should be separated from God. From which inspiration the mind is illuminated, and then the gift of piety shines in the soul without a cloud, as the light of morning, like the early sun illuminating the east. Thence the gift of piety proceeds, and makes the noontide of spiritual day in the soul, inclining man to offer, both internal and external worship to God, as the principle of his creation, and the end of his beatitude, both by interior and exterior operations, and then there is a meridian light in the human soul shining without clouds. Lastly, the gift of piety in the soul terminates the spiritual day, when it inclines the mind to have compassion upon others; for in the work of charity it is consummated, or otherwise it has been observed, that the knowledge of creatures is but an evening light when compared with that light of piety, which inclines the soul to adore God; for to incline to anything but to him, unless it be on account of him,

is not the leisure of Mary, but the occupation of Martha, "who was troubled about many things, while only one was necessary *."

From this point the way before us, though far, lies open to the end of the present Book; for henceforth we have only to remark the distinguishing characteristic of the Catholic generations in ages of faith in relation to wisdom, to show how they valued it, and confirm our statement by a rapid glance at the series of historic personages connected with the school—to observe what was their method of philosophy—in what they made it consist—in what light they regarded the wisdom of the ancients—what were the prominent features of their own philosophy—and what were the advantages resulting to it from their position in regard to the Church. Finally, we have to inquire, in what manner the divine promise was fulfilled in them, and in what sense it was true, that they, while living upon earth, beheld God? This task which remains, is indeed arduous, but let us advance with courage; for, as Plato saith, "dispirited men have never raised aught that could endure."

CHAPTER V.

THAT men, in ages of faith, loved and cultivated wisdom, might easily be demonstrated, from the very accusations brought against them by the sophists of later times; for the facts which give these writers most offence, the acknowledgment of the ecclesiastical authority, the submission of the people to their clergy, prove that wisdom was the first thing in their estimation; since otherwise, an idea would not have been stronger than force material, nor would he, who commanded intelligence, have been able to retain his dominion, though in exile or in chains.

"During the middle ages," as a late profound historian remarks, "through all life predominated the word of the Founder of the Church, that his kingdom is not of this

* S. Bonavent. de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti, cap. 11.

world; but through that very knowledge the Church attained to its supreme power over all Europe; and never was it so energetically displayed, as when the Holy See was attacked with most violence, whether by princes or people*.” Socrates said, “that there are three races of men—the philosophic, or that of men loving wisdom; the ambitious, or those loving contention and glory; and the covetous, comprising all who love gain: and, he added, that there are three kinds of pleasure corresponding to these†.” Without doubt, this threefold division of humanity might have been traced in the ages which we are surveying, as well as in all other periods of the world. The clean of heart at that time discerned and deplored it—“O, how often do we seek truth itself,” exclaims Richard of St. Victor, “not for truth sake, but for vanity; and having found truth, love it, not in truth, but through vanity; and what is most miserable, we trade with the words of life for the gain of death‡.” Hugo, of St. Victor, no less recognised it: “I see many studious,” he says, “but few religious. They love reading, not religion; nay, from the love of reading they contract a hatred for religion, wishing to have the chief seats, and receive salutations from the people as great doctors§;” you can trace, therefore, still the ambitious and the covetous tribe. But the extraordinary extension and predominance of the race loving wisdom, during the ages of faith, is a fact which no historian has been able to pass by unnoticed, though the majority of later writers have systematically perverted and misrepresented it.

“Ignorance is an atrophy of the soul; but knowledge is its food||:” so speaks the early Church, through the mouth of St. Clement of Alexandria, and the same judgment of the Catholic society is pronounced in the middle ages by St. Bonaventura, commenting upon the words of the Apostle, “it is your reasonable service;” for he adds, “easily will the spirit of error delude you, if you neglect science; nor hath the cunning enemy any machinations more efficacious to remove love from the

* Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. 425.

† Plato de Repub. lib. ix.

‡ De Erudit. Hom. Inter. lib. i. c. 3.

§ Ex Miscellan. lib. ii. tit. 52.

|| Stromat. lib. vii. 12.

heart, than that of causing you to walk negligently and without reason ; for God is wisdom, and he wishes himself to be loved, not alone affectionately, but also wisely," "*Sapientia est Deus, et vult se amari non solum dulciter sed sapienter* *." All activity, according to the schoolmen, springs from the entrance of knowledge ; the state of knowledge is the happy rest of contemplation, heavenly peace !

The Church, collectively, prays that she may ever advance in spiritual progress †, and the desire of her individual members may be learned from those ancient rituals, by which it appears that there was a mass expressly for obtaining wisdom ‡. In ages of faith men valued wisdom ; probably it was that love which gave them faith. Who now values wisdom ? Schleiermacker, speaking of a nation, which at present assumes the right of giving laws and philosophy to all Europe, says, "these proud men, respected far more than they deserve, know of no other redemption but gain and profit. Their zeal for knowledge is only a mere pretence, a sham fight ; their wisdom of life, a false bauble set with art ; and their holy freedom itself serves only too often to selfishness : they are never in earnest unless where it is a question of handling things of some sort or other ; for knowledge serves them only to trade withal, and of its dead wood they make masts and rudders for their commercial life's voyage §." If such be the testimony of a friend, or at least of one who approves of their position, in regard to the Catholic wisdom, what might not be said by those who esteem that position itself, an evidence that the truth or a due sense of the importance of truth is not in them ? Even setting aside the religious view, methinks one might reasonably prefer to such a state of things that enthusiasm in the old schools of philosophy, which made it necessary for king Ptolomy to prohibit the lectures of Hegesia, the Cyrenaïc, or the disciple of Aristippus || ? "The danger which he sought to obviate," argued ignorance, "but how much better was the

* S. Bonav. Meditat. Vitæ Christi, cap. xliv.

† Prayer on the Feast of St. Dominick.

‡ Annales Camaldulensium, append.

§ Reden über die Religion, 15.

|| Cicero Tuscul. i. 34.

desire from which it sprang, than the apathy now pervading breasts, perhaps equally as ignorant?" "Sophists," says Novalis, "are persons, who, attentive to the weakness of philosophy, seek to make use of it for their own advantage, or for certain unphilosophic unworthy ends. They have, in truth, nothing to do with philosophy, they are its bitterest enemies *."

Men value science, and love to pursue physical truth: though in a country eminent for its pretensions, we are told by one who engaged in such pursuits, "that those who have hitherto cultivated science, knew, or should have known, that there was no demand for it, that it led to little honour, and to less profit †." Still many illustrious men laboured at this mine, and, doubtless, with a disinterested love; but of wisdom, in the divine sense of the term, of the higher and nobler study that can unfold its everlasting gates, who is heard to say with Job, "non dabitur aurum obrizum pro ea, nec appendetur argentum in commutatione ejus? Non adæquabitur ei aurum vel vitrum, nec commutabuntur pro ea vasa auri?" Yet the monks and hermits of the middle ages, who left all for it, yea, many kings and secular men, who, in affection, had followed them, though retained in the world by a sense of duty, might assuredly have said it, and would as assuredly have been believed by every one around them, to say it with truth. The schoolmen were not like those trencher philosophers, which, in the later ages of the Roman state, were usually in the houses of great persons, of which kind Lucian maketh a merry description of the philosopher, that the great lady took to accompany her in her coach, and would needs have him carry her little dog, which he doing officiously, and yet uncomely, the page scoffed and said, "that he doubted the philosopher of a Stoic, would turn to be a Cynic. They were not like the philosophers of whom Diogenes said, in answer to one who asked him, why they were the followers of rich men? answering "soberly and sharply," as Lord Bacon observes, "because they knew what they had need of." We have contrasted monks with sophists, but what shall I say of those who loved monks? The type of royalty in the middle ages was not a soldier, not a lawgiver, not a

* Schriften, ii. 133.

† Babbage, on the Decline of Science. 1830.

mock pageant, who could judge of dishes rather than of intelligences; but it was the kingly state of man in primal innocence, when an angel might have said to him,

“And thou, thyself, seem'st otherwise inclined,
Than to a worldly crown; addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute.”

Many courts of feudal barons even were then little academies, still and contemplative in living art. “*Beatitude est gaudium de veritate* ;” these words of St. Augustin express the whole mind of the ages of faith. The moderns are astonished at the monuments of their indefatigable researches, which have come down to us, and here they can learn the secret of all this intellectual activity; it was the conviction, not that glory and profit should be the prize of learning, but that the joy of knowing truth was beatitude. The act of wisdom, according to the angel of the school, “is a kind of beginning and participation of the glory of the blessed spirits in heaven, and therefore it approaches the nearest to that felicity*.” Peter the Venerable says, “they who approached to the wisdom of angels, must also have approached to the beatitude of angels; for the wisdom of angels is on that very account true wisdom, because it is happy†.”

“The rational mind,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “is one, and it generates from itself intellect, one from one; and when sometimes it beholds how subtle, how true, how convenient, how pleasant it is, it soon loves it and rejoices itself in it; it sees and it is amazed, and it wonders how itself could ever have found such a thing: vehemently it desires always to look at it, always to possess it, always to be delighted with it: it pleases by itself; it pleases on account of itself; nor is there any thing which is sought beyond it, because in it all is loved. In that, contemplation of truth is delectable in vision, sweet in possession, delightful in enjoyment. With it the mind rests and never feels weariness, because by that one, yet not solitary companion, it is gladdened. Wisdom is life, and the love of wisdom is the felicity of life;—*Sapientia enim vita, et amor sapientiæ est felicitas vitæ* ‡.” “Amongst all the occupations of men,” says

* S. Thom. 1. 2. Q. 66. art. 5. ad. 2.

† S. Pet. Ven. Epist. lib. iii. 7.

‡ De Tribus Diebus, cap. 21, 22.

St. Thomas, "the most perfect, the most sublime, the most useful, and the most agreeable, is the study of wisdom *." "Who doth not desire to be initiated in such mysteries," exclaims the great Christian philosopher, John Picus of Mirandula; "who, casting aside all thought for human things, despising the goods of fortune, and neglecting the body, doth not long for this divine banquet, even while on earth, and moistened with the nectar of eternity to give the mortal animal in exchange for immortality! Who doth not wish to be agitated by these Socratic furies, sung by Plato in the *Phædo*, that, with the rowing of wings and feet, he may pass hence from the world, which is given up to malice, and be borne with the swiftest course to the celestial Jerusalem †!"

"Philosophy can be pretended," observes Quintilian, confirming his assertion by adducing the example of those who sat for a short time in the schools of philosophers, in order that afterwards, in public sad, at home dissolute, they might acquire authority by despising others ‡. Philosophy can be pursued from unworthy motives. When Plato came to Syracuse, and Dionysius was seized with zeal for philosophic study, the royal Palace used to be covered with dust from the crowd of geometricians which attended; but when Dionysius fell from this ardour for philosophy, and devoted himself again to wine and dissoluteness, immediately, as if metamorphosed by Circe, forgetfulness, discordance, and ignorance took possession of them §.

The love of wisdom which inspired Catholic generations, in ages of faith, had nothing in common with such shows of philosophy, nor could its effects have arisen from any passion to which they were subordinate.

"*Hæc sunt sola quæ quærere debent homines veritas et bonitas.*" Thus speaks the whole school through the mouth of Hugo of St. Victor ||. Where the ancient institutions and modes of thinking have given place to those of the civilization which arises out of the modern notions, the approved language of instructors is not

* S. Thom. *Adversus Gentes*, c. 2.

† Joan. Picus *Mirandula de Hominum Dignitate*.

‡ xii. 3. § Plutarch *de Sig. Ver. Amicit.* ix.

|| *De Sacramentis*, lib. ii. p. 14. c. 9.

precisely this: if it were, indeed, their very structures, the stones themselves would cry out against them, as Pugin, in his architectural contrasts, might convince us. There are a few other things about which men would be told they might justly be troubled; and, in fact, so far from thinking that truth and goodness are proposed as the only objects worthy of an earnest pursuit, I do not perceive how one can avoid concluding that thoughtlessness and indifference to truth, which does not concern personal respectability, are even studied as amongst the necessary arts of life. For do we not witness every day the evidence of truth, on being thrust home, treated precisely as was the remembrance of death by Justice Shallow, "Oh, to see how many of mine old acquaintance are dead! We must all follow—certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure; death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?"

We have no occasion to look so far back as to the civilization of the ancient world, to find a verification of the truth of what Socrates remarks, in the sixth book of Plato's Republic, where he says, "at present, those who apply while young to philosophy, and who seem to be the greatest philosophers, attach themselves to what is between œconomy and money-making, and they keep aloof from the most difficult branch, which consists in discussions, for this I call the most difficult. In after-life, if, when invited by any one who perseveres in philosophy, they consent to hear their discussions, they think they do great things, and suppose that it is something which is gratuitous on their part, unnecessary, and quite of secondary importance, as an accidental exercise at the side of their real business. But when they come to old age, with the exception of a very few, they are extinguished much more completely than the sun of Heraclitus, inasmuch as they are never again illuminated *."

This callous insensibility to truths, which are above the business of a mere secular life or the ends of ambition, was evidently playing a great part in the contest of the two systems which divided the Christian world. An instance, in which it was very manifest, is mentioned

* De Repub. lib. vi.

by a recent author, who relates, that a philosopher of the modern opinions, who was conversing with a Catholic priest, acknowledged that it would be more judicious in his party to renounce all idea of appealing to the authority of the Fathers to confirm them ; but added, “ still you must admit that we have Augustine on our side, with respect to the Eucharist.” “ Indeed,” exclaimed the other, opening his breviary, and showing the words of St. Augustine in testimony to the Catholic faith. What followed?—“ You are right,” was the reply. “ Let me note the passage down, for I shall be amused to see how it will puzzle my good brethren in our college.” He only thought of displaying his own erudition. Alas ! how far behind the Roman philosopher. “ Ego enim, si aut ostentatione aliqua adductus, aut studio certandi ad hanc potissimam philosophiam me applicavi : non modo stultitiam meam, sed etiam mores et naturam condemnandam puto *.”

It is certain, also, that the influence of the love of wisdom in ages of faith, upon life and the order of society in general, produced results wholly unlike those of the intellectual cultivation at present.

Philosophy, according to the views entertained respecting it in the middle ages, is something different from and something higher than merely the means of serving one or other of the various branches of academic learning and science, of furthering one or other especial object or pursuit of life. Repeatedly, moreover, did the scholastic and mystic philosophers enforce what the wise men of antiquity had observed, that when the whole life is dissipated and lost in external employments, pleasures, or endeavours after profit, so that nothing peculiarly internal, no such feeling or sentiment, nay, not even once a real inward thought remains or can find room ; there, also, philosophy can find no hearing for the words of inward life, and can hope for no corresponding echo for her higher thoughts, nor for that deep sentiment from which she proceeds†. Frederick Schlegel points out the distinction between the academic instruction of modern times and philosophy in the true sense of the word, and as it was understood in the middle ages. “ This,” he

* Cicero, Lucullus.

† F. Schlegel Philosophie der Sprache, 15.

observes, "is something very different from the science of any particular profession or faculty pursued by young men who are preparing for the various employments of civil life. Philosophy," he adds, "will never suffer herself to be studied as it were aside, only once and for a short time, as a superfluous article of luxury: it is only with entire earnestness and with the fulness of love that she can be attained, and indeed the true beginning itself consists in this earnestness of thought and in this highest love * "

Language like this would now be thought to denote some young and dangerous enthusiast of the Romantic school, and yet it is only what we find on the tongue of the holy fathers. "I wish to prove to you, my dear Eudoxius," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, writing to that rhetorician, "that you should take care not to neglect philosophy, for which nature has given you such an opening, and not to apply to any other profession for which you would be less qualified. This is what you should do, not only because the philosophy to which I exhort you is the most elevated of all things, but also because it is what is, besides, peculiarly adapted to you. Now it is a proverb which forbids us to attempt to stop the course of a river; and a poet has wisely interdicted music to him who is destined for horsemanship, lest he should succeed neither in horsemanship nor in music: what, then, are the symptoms of this natural aptitude which I remark in you?—the tranquillity and simplicity of your life and manners, and a soul totally estranged from all that relates to disguise, to cunning, and imposture; and besides, the elevation of your genius and of your thoughts, and a certain instinct which carries you, without an effort, to meditation. I might add, too, that you differ from the generality of rhetoricians in this respect—that you know how to blush. Beware, then, how you renounce what you have already acquired of philosophy—how you prefer a second place in a secondary profession to the first in the most sublime of all professions. When you may rise like the eagle, be not content to excel among the populace of birds. How long shall we suffer the inflation of pride on account of vile and fleeting things? How long shall we abandon

ourselves to these vain dissipations and multitudinous illusions? How long shall we be moved to ecstasy by vain applause? Let us forsake these chimeras; let us become men, casting off these dreams, escaping beyond these shadows; let us leave to others these pleasures and luxuries, which at the bottom contain more bitterness than charms; let envy, let circumstances, let fortune (for these are the names given to the inconstancy of things here below) occupy, agitate, and distract other men: no more speak to us of thrones, or principalities, or riches, or honours, or elevations, or of that despicable glory which, after all, dishonours us much more than contempt and derision when it gets possession of our soul, nor of all these vain representations of theatres which occupy the world. For us, let us fix our affections upon wisdom, let us desire to want every thing else but God, who alone is our wealth, for eternity." Such was the voice, too, from the Palatine schools, as well as from the cloisters of the middle age—such was the desire of wisdom in those whose hearts were clean. Thus intense and undivided was the noble love that glowed within them. It was not merely a pure intellectual choice—it was also a hearty zeal and passionate affection, which urged their rapid steps tumultuous, by eagerness impelled of truth and goodness. But how can our lukewarm breasts conceive this intenser fervency? How can we comprehend the emotions, the clear spirit of him who raiseth Aquin above Arpinum's name; who, when on earth, while explaining a book which treats on the mystery of the blessed Trinity, observed not that the flame of a taper had burnt down to his hand and scorched it, so spiritual and impassible had already become the fleshly weeds through brightness of celestial vision.

The language of the middle ages, in reference to philosophy, had less resemblance to that of the modern schools than to the celebrated sayings of the ancients, "that the precepts of wisdom are of such divine sweetness, that they should be enjoyed as ambrosia and nectar, and that all who seek happiness must learn to philosophize*." It was more opposed to the maxims of later moralists than to the replies of Pythagoras and Anaxagoras, who, being asked for what end man was created,

* Jamblich. Adhortat. ad Philosoph. cap. 204.

replied, that he might behold the sky, and that he might contemplate the heavens.

On referring to ecclesiastical history, we find that studies were always dear to the Church. As Berthier remarks, “the inconveniences of science appeared to her, in all ages, as infinitely less to be feared than the consequences of ignorance or of a superficial instruction*.” The zeal of the Holy See to promote studies was displayed in every age. The most important canon laws are made to yield to this object. Thus the fourth Lateran council, which restricts all clergymen to one benefice, adds this exception: “Nevertheless, when sublime and learned persons are to be honoured with greater benefices, when reason demands it, the Apostolic See can give a dispensation †.” In conformity with which provision, Pope Honorius permitted Michael Scot, while studying Arabic and Hebrew, to have more than one benefice. The zeal of Urban IV. for science and philosophy may be collected from the letter addressed to him by Campanus of Navarra, which is given by Tiraboschi. It was, in effect, owing to his encouragement that St. Thomas of Aquin undertook his work on Aristotle. Of the general desire, in this respect, we have only to open any of our ancient books to find proof. Hear Hugo of St. Victor speaking of his studies in early life:—“I can affirm that I never despised any thing which belonged to erudition, but I have often learned many things which others treated as a joke or a madness. I remember, while I was only a scholastic, to have studied carefully to know the names of every thing that I saw; I used to commit to memory all the sentences, questions, and oppositions, with their solutions, which I had learned in the day; I used to describe geometrical figures with charcoal on the floor. I do not mention this to you in order to boast of my science, which is nothing or but little, but that I may show you that he proceeds best who proceeds with order—without making any great jump. Many things, indeed, you may find in histories and other writings which, taken by themselves, seem to be of little or no utility; but yet, if you consider their connexion with other things,

* Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles, xii—xv. Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. xiv.

† Cap. xxix.

you will find that they are useful and necessary. Learn all things, and you will find afterwards that nothing is superfluous. Science cribbed and confined is not pleasant *.”

Alanus de Insulis speaks to the same effect :—“ Learn,” he says, “ as if you were to live for ever ; live, as if you were to die on the morrow. So the apostle says, ‘ Libros lege ; et affer tecum libros duos.’ When you commence any reading, do not relinquish it the next moment, but adhere to it faithfully, and do not as if through disgust pass on to another †.”

But without visiting the avowed worshippers of Wisdom, who devoted themselves wholly to converse with her in cloistered shades, let us hear only a few eminent Catholic men remaining in the world. “ I will take this praise to myself,” says John Picus of Mirandula, “ and to be praised for this I shall not blush—that for no other cause have I philosophized, unless in order that I might philosophize ; nor have I ever hoped or sought any reward or fruit from my studies and lucubrations, excepting the cultivation of my mind and the knowledge of truth ; of which I am so covetous, and with which I am so much in love, that having abandoned all care of private and public affairs, I have given myself wholly up to contemplation ; from which no accusations of the envious, no reproaches of the enemies of wisdom, ever have been able or ever shall have power to deter me ‡.”

Marsilius Ficinus, in a letter to Benedict Caluccio, writes in these terms :—“ I shall continue to defend religion with all my strength ; not that religion wants such defence, for it stands by God’s will in despite of enemies, but because I then only seem to myself to live happily, yea, rather, then only to live, when I either write or speak or think upon divine subjects §.” Whole nations were characterized by this spirit. “ When the Spaniards apply themselves to letters,” says an ancient writer, “ it is never for the sake of gain, but only through the love of knowledge ||.” Even until these days of

* Hugo S. Vict. *Eruditionis Didascalicæ*, lib. vi. c. 3.

† Sum. de Arte Præd. cap. 36.

‡ Joan. Pic. Mirand. de *Hominum Dignitate*.

§ Mars. Ficin. *Epist.* lib. i.

|| Lucii Marinei Siculi de reb. Hispaniæ, lib. ii.

purification the Spaniards were said to prefer their morning walks and conversations philosophical, on the *Puerta del Sol* at Madrid, the *Zocodover* at Toledo, the *Plaza de Santo Domingo* at Seville, and the *Plaza de Vivar-rambla* and the *Zacatin* at Grenada, to all the spectacles and amusements of Paris or London.

But let us again hear the Italian philosophers of the middle ages. Hermolaus Barbarus, patriarch of Aquileia, writes as follows to Antonio Calmo, patriarch of Venice:—"Take courage, Antonio, thou who didst call me sleeping and reluctant to the priesthood! I bear these adverse with more constancy than formerly I enjoyed prosperous things. The Lord hath sent me help from his holy place, and hath strengthened me out of Sion. Let some trust in chariots, others in horses; we will invoke the name of our God. Again I say, be of good courage, Antonio! We have risen, and are standing upright; *mirabiles elationes maris, mirabilis in altis Dominus*. I who have philosophised so many years for others ought to be able, for myself also, to philosophise. I see the game of fortune, I understand the force of the tempest; I consider and estimate the full extent of these calamities; I am happy and at peace. For letters was I born, to letters was I dedicated, without letters I cannot live, though I can live without the things which are obstacles to letters. I have borne many honours, in the republic, with what favour it is not for me to say. During twelve years my time was lost to letters. These events have now released me, and I return to them. O happy calamity, which restores letters to me and me to letters, or rather me to myself! O felicitous overthrow, which gave me back peace! O delightful tempest, which brought me security! O sweet bitterness, which conducted me, after a long tossing on the waves—do not say after shipwreck—into the sweetest port *!"

Literature is not an unknown word in the ancient writings, as some have supposed. In the proem of the translation of the *History of the Normans*, written in the thirteenth century, we are told that knowledge and science are acquired "by literature;" but to appreciate with justice the passages which enforce its importance, we must recollect that by letters men in ages of faith

* Ang. Politian. *Epist. lib. xii.*

understood a study which was subservient to the highest purposes. "Dum secularibus literis instruimur," says St. Gregory the Great, "in spiritualibus adjuvamus;" and that this remark was verified in the very philosopher whose words are above quoted will appear from reading his letter to Picus of Mirandula, in which he says, "I wish we might sometimes live together, that we might philosophise together on nature, on God, on holy manners. I cannot express how much I long for this. I beseech you, if you ever deemed me worthy of your benevolence, grant me now, as Hermolaus the priest, an equal or a higher place in your affections, that him whom you loved as a Pagan of the world you may more ardently embrace when made a soldier of Christ *."

Beautiful are the words of Petrarch:—"Thou knowest, O Lord, before whom is all my desire, that I have never sought more from letters than that I might be made good. Thou who searchest the reins and the heart knowest that even in youth I was never so desirous of glory as not to prefer being good to being learned †."

Angelo Politian defends learning and poetry by appealing to the judgment of Martianus Genazanensis, who, although of incredible severity of life, and a preacher most revered by the people, yet disdains not to cultivate both ‡.

In the middle ages there was not heard the trivial declamation of certain poets against prose, or of certain prose writers against poesy, of naturalists against metaphysicians, or of mathematicians against those who did not study mathematics; but all sciences, all arts, all modes of cultivating or of imparting the perception of truth and beauty received a homage from society and from men of holy zeal. "Gyrum cœli circuivi sola §." "Metaphysical science may speak thus," says Duns Scotus, "for it is like a circle which contains all things. Vide arcum, et benedic qui fecit illum; valde speciosus est in splendore suo, et gyravit cœlum in circuitu gloriæ suæ ||. The metaphysic habit," he continues, "is a certain mystic bow, darting the arrows of truth against the

* Epist. lib. xii.

† De Ignorantia Sui Ipsius et Aliorum.

‡ Politian. Miscellaneorum Centuriæ Prim. Præfat.

§ Eccles. 24. || Eccles. 43.

enemies who are of falsehood; and therefore is it, as it were, a refulgent bow amongst the clouds of glory. Behold it, therefore, and bless God who made it; for it encompasseth the heavens, that is, the whole university of creatures, and especially of such whose habitation is in heaven. It says ‘circuivi,’ for this science goes round inquiring from all things truly, without deception, and generally without exception; and therefore, in a figure, it is as the river Phison, of which we read in Genesis that it flows round the whole land of Evilath, where gold is produced, that is, wisdom. Evilath is interpreted foolish, and such are all human sciences of themselves, metaphysics excepted. Lastly, we read Sola, for amongst all human sciences that alone excels. She sits alone, admired and venerated by all as a queen in the sight of all creatures *.”

Richard of St. Victor, in a very curious passage of his treatise on the condition of the interior man, traces the causes and consequences of a neglect of learning. “We see many,” he says, “who, after giving brilliant proofs of their study and excellent fruits of science, when perhaps to some honourable grade promoted, or when they undertake the care of any administration, immediately begin to despise the discipline of their learning, and thenceforth to hold themselves at leisure only for secular business, to destroy in one day all the followers of wisdom, and to publish their hidden secrets. What would these do if they received the kingdom of Nabuchodonoser? How many, again, do we see, who, after long application to spiritual exercises, and after having received the gift of contemplation, when perhaps by any temptation or fatigue fallen from that sublime height, lay aside all care of spiritual studies, and expose themselves every hour to all wandering and vain discourses. What else do they but kill their wise men? Mark what they do in observing the progress of Nabuchodonoser. First, he orders all the wise men of Babylon to be killed, and presently after the wise men of the Jews are sought for to be slain. Behold by what degrees the studious mind often is dissolved, loses its vivacity, and falls gradually from the highest to the lowest state. First, it abandons the care of secular and afterwards of spiritual learning,

* Duns Scoti Metaphys. Proœm.

gives itself up wholly to exterior affairs, and kills in itself, as it were, all the followers of science and wisdom by deserting all study of human arts, all instance in contemplation, meditation, reading, and prayer. Of the wise men of the Jews it is said that they were sought out for destruction—that is, an occasion or some way of excuse is desired, that with more safety and freedom, and with a more secure conscience, the dissolved mind may cast away the studies of sacred erudition; for thus we sometimes pretend weakness of body, sometimes charity, that, deserting the contemplative life, we may devote ourselves to exterior business. Thus an occasion, and as if opportunity of place, is sought out for killing Daniel with the other wise men of the Jews *.”

The love which men in ages of faith entertained for wisdom, and the ardour with which they sought to promote intellectual cultivation, and to prevent poverty from becoming an obstacle or an excuse, which is the reason alleged by Lothaire in 820 for constituting academies †, may be inferred also from the multitude of scholastic foundations which then arose, and from the extraordinary honours conferred upon them. Having already visited the schools and universities of the middle ages, we shall not be detained long at present in confirming this observation by reference to history, though we cannot avoid arresting our course to remark a few prominent facts which demonstrate the efforts which were then made to provide for the extension of all studies which had truth and goodness for their end.

From the earliest age, as we observed before, the school was a general appendage to the Basilica. According to Landulph senior, the church of St. Ambrose at Milan, in the eleventh century, could boast of two philosophical schools which were well frequented, the professors of which were supported by the archbishops. Most churches elsewhere had similar institutions. The university of Paris grew by degrees, beginning in the church of Nôtre Dame, with theology, having its school of arts at the church of St. Julian; then having schools in the abbey of St. Victor, and four halls in the Rue au

* Rich S. Vict. De Eruditione Hominis Interioris, lib. i. P. i. c. 7.

† Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. 1. 11. 151.

Foirre. In process of time it acquired its schools of decretals and medicine, while masters used to hire any rooms they thought fit to give their lectures in, until about the year 1250, when colleges, which were nothing but hospices built through charity for lodging and teaching poor scholars, began to be erected, of which the first was the Sorbonne*.

When the opinion became prevalent that the interests of philosophy could be better served by universities than by the separate monastic schools in which they had before been cultivated, the number of the former which arose throughout Europe gave remarkable proof of the zeal and ardour of those times for learning. Before the pseudo-reformation sixty-six were established, of which sixteen were in Germany, Paris and Bologna being the two first cities to institute them in a regular form. In the latter, in 1260, there were ten thousand students; at Oxford, in 1200, there were four thousand. At Paris, in the sixteenth century, there were forty thousand scholars; in the single college of Guienne, at Bordeaux, there were two thousand five hundred scholars; the university of Toulouse was equally flourishing†.

Designedly, however, these institutions were not suffered to concentrate themselves in capitals. After the troubles in the university of Paris, in 1228, when students removed thence to Rheims, Orleans, Anjou, and even to England, Italy, and Spain, Pope Gregory IX., while exerting himself to the utmost to prevent that university from falling to pieces, observed that "nevertheless division and dispersion are very necessary for the interests of science itself." The multiplication of universities proceeded, therefore, under the highest sanction: that of Montpellier was founded in 1180, those of Orleans and Toulouse in the first half of the thirteenth, those of Lyons and Avignon in the fourteenth century. In Italy, the universities of Ravenna, Salerno, and Pisa were founded in the twelfth, those of Arezzo, Ferrara, Padua, Perugia, Piacenza, Sienna, Treviso, Vercelli, Vicenza, and Naples, in the thirteenth, and that of Pavia in the fourteenth century, when that of Palermo also took its rise. The universities of Salamanca, Valencia, and Co-

* Pasquier, *Récherches de la France*, liv. ix. 14.

† Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, tom. v. 253.

imbra were founded in the thirteenth, those of Toledo and Alcala in the fifteenth century. The German universities were of later origin than the Italian: those of Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne, and Erfurt, arose in the fourteenth, those of Leipzig, Freiberg, Treves, Tubingen, Mainz, and Louvain in the fifteenth century; that of Cracow, in Poland, was founded in 1347.

The object of the Holy See and of the Episcopal Order in founding and promoting these academies, may be learnt from the bull of Pope Urban VI., approving of the proposed university at Kulm, in the north of Prussia, where the schools of Thorn, Elbing, and Danzig, under the Teutonic order, had been long famous; for it contains these words:—"Faith itself may be thus extended, the simple instructed, equity preserved, judgment cultivated, and the intelligence of men illuminated. Let there be, then, a fountain of science, from whose plenitude all who desire to be imbued with learning may be refreshed." In consequence, however, of the death of Winrich, and other events, this projected institution was not established, and the monastic school alone remained *.

Stephen Pasquier remarks, that the connection with the church and the episcopal authority was in general indicated even by the locality, as in the instances of Paris, Toulouse, Orleans, Lyons, Poitiers, Angers, Bourdeaux, Bourges, Cahors, Nantes, Grenoble, Valence, and Rheims, where the universities were all annexed to cathedral churches; of those in France, Caen, which was founded by the English, being the only exception †.

With respect to the magnitude and religious grandeur of these institutions, there are sufficient details on record from which we can form an opinion. Thus, in Louvain, were forty colleges, of which four were devoted to teach philosophy, which till lately retained the name of the signs that had first distinguished them—the Lily, the Castle, the Falcon, and the Boar. Many abbeys had also houses here for their students. At Douai there were sumptuous colleges belonging to the abbeys of Marchiennes, Anchin and St. Vaast ‡.

Gozechenus, the scholastic, in his epistle to Valcherus,

* Voigt Geschichte Preussens, v. 491.

† Recherches de la France, IX.

‡ Les Delices des Païsbas.

his ancient disciple, speaks of Liege in these terms:—"This flower of Gaul, like another Athens, flourishes in the study of liberal discipline, and, what is better, shines in the observance of divine religion; so that, as far as relates to letters, you may feel no want of the academy of Plato; and as to what concerns religious worship, you need not wish for the Rome of Leo *."

The zeal and charity of private persons were the great sources of their magnificence. In the university of Paris three chairs were founded by private men: the first of theology, by Robert de Sorbon, under St. Louis; that of mathematics, by Peter Ramus, in 1568; and the third of theology, to explain the Scriptures, by aid of the fathers and of the Greek and Hebrew tongues, in 1606, by Jean de Rouen, provisor of the college of our Lady at Rouen. The care and superintendence of the universities was an object of the greatest solicitude to the sovereign pontiffs; for these learned incorporations, unlike those of the present day, were practically convinced that they stood in need of reform from time to time, and always willing to submit to it. That of Paris underwent several reformatations: the first was by Cardinal St. Stephen, legate of Pope Innocent III., in the year 1215; the second was by Simon, cardinal of St. Cecilia, legate in 1278; the third, which was of more importance, was made at Rome in 1366, in presence of Boniface, chancellor of the university, by two cardinals delegated by Pope Urban V.; the last and most signal was by William Cardinal d'Estouteville, legate in 1452†.

The schools of Paris enjoyed singular privileges, and the highest reputation throughout the Christian world. John Picus of Mirandula observes, in his Apology, that the academy of Paris had lately laid down certain articles of which the English said that they did not pass the sea, and that, he might add, that they did not pass the Alps. "Nevertheless," he continues, "I have used the phrase as Thomas places it, and the common way, calling the common way of theologicians that which is now commonly held at Paris, where especially flourishes the study of theology; so that my own conclusion, on account of

* Ermenrici Monach. Angiensis de Grammatica apud Mabil. Vet. Analect.

† Pasquier, *Récherches de la France*, liv. ix. 25.

my reverence for the university of Paris, I only propose as probable *."

With strict justice, in fact, as well as eloquence, does an eminent professor in that capital allude to the college in which he delivered his remarkable lectures, saying, "From the thirteenth century, and the time of St. Louis, the name of Sorbonne recalls the great school of France, or rather that of the world. All that was illustrious in the middle ages has sat on these benches. The Irish subtilty of Scotus, the African ardour of Raymund Lully, the poetic ideality of Petrarch—all have met here. Those who could rest nowhere, the authors of the Jerusalem and of the Divina Comedia, the exile of Florence, the wandering contemplatist of the three worlds, met here for an instant. In the seventeenth century this inclosure, renewed by Richelieu, witnessed the first essay of the Christian Plato, Malebranche. Such are the noble traditions attached to this place. This house is old however much they may whiten its walls; it has seen much; many ages have lived here—all have left something here †."

That the love of truth and wisdom which inspired the clean of heart could influence even the government of states and the public mind of nations, during ages of faith, might be inferred from merely observing the honours and privileges conferred upon those who were engaged in the pursuit of learning. Although we before touched on all this ground, I think the reader will not regret paying it, in passing, a second visit. Luther, during his calmer intervals, lamented the decay of the universities and the disuse of the honours with which kings and people had treated wisdom. "Formerly," says he, "masters of art were honoured: one carried lighted flambeaux before them. It was a great festival when doctors were made. One went round the city on horseback; one put on one's best clothes. All that is no more; but I wish that good customs were revived †."

Such a wish, indeed, was not consistent with his assertion at other times, that "the devil never invented more cunning and more pernicious means to root up utterly the gospel of Christ, than the design of founding the

* Joan. P. Mirand. Apologia.

† Michelet.

‡ Michelet Mem. de Luth. tom. iii. 107.

universities;" or with his opinion that the academies are figured by the idol Moloch, supported on the authority of Master Philip Melancthon, who, in his book called *Didymus*, commends Wicklyf for a wise man,—“*qui omnium primus vidit academias esse Satanæ synagogas.*” However, I have not here to reconcile Luther with himself or with Master Philip. I merely cite his words, on one occasion, to show that the privileges and honours of scholars had a side which even he could not disrelish. Stephen Pasquier mentions some of the privileges of the scholars of Paris. By edict of Philip-le-bel, in 1299, their goods could not be seized for debt; by that of Louis Hutin, they could transport their goods wherever they chose, without molestation; by that of Philip le Valois, in 1340, they were exempt from all taxes, and they could not be summoned from Paris for any trial. Philip-le-Bel, in granting privileges to the university of Lyons, endeavoured to reconcile the citizens to the advantages conferred upon the scholars, by reminding them that the state is adorned and honoured by studies, and that it is therefore for the interest of the citizens themselves to bear cheerfully the superior privileges which are granted in order to promote learning*. All scholars were noble, and carried swords. If a scholar travelled, all farmers were bound to supply him, at least for hire, with a horse. On arriving at a town, where all lodgings were hired, the citizens were bound to yield him up one; and, as we before observed, no master of a house could eject a scholar who lodged with him. Artizans who might annoy him, by noise or offensive odours, were obliged to remove their shops or manufactories elsewhere. The scholar who studied at Paris or Toulouse was a Parisian and a Toulousian, and enjoyed all the privileges without the charges of citizenship. Not only did the scholar pay no tax, but it was a punishable offence to put him on the list of contributors†.

Of the dignity with which the persons of the studious were invested, proof might be seen in some curious monuments of the middle age, which were solemnly erected to attest the punishment of those who had forgotten it: thus at the corner of a street in Paris, on a

* Pasquier, *Récherches de la France*, liv. ix. 37.

† Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, tom. v.

wall of the Augustinian monastery, was represented the wrong which had been done to Friar Peter Gougy, of that order, doctor in theology, and how the sergeants who had injured him were punished at the demand of the rector of the university *. The servants of Messire Charles de Sanoisy, Great Chamberlain of France, and the king's favourite, having rashly attacked some scholars in a procession of the university in the church of St. Catherine, of the Vale of Scholars, by sentence of the king's council the house of that personage was demolished, and Sanoisy obliged to found and endow a chapel in favour of the university, and to pay besides to it one thousand livres; which sentence was executed, but the house afterwards was rebuilt by consent of the university, which in Pasquier's time was called the Hostel de Lorraine; but with this condition, that there should be a painting attached to the wall, representing the whole history and the judgment †.

With this liberality of rulers, the zeal and ardour of the people corresponded. The schools of philosophy in the middle ages were not then filled with boys of sixteen years of age; the greatest number, as Gervaise remarks, were grown-up men, many of them married and fathers of families, who thought it neither frivolous nor dishonourable, after discharging the duties of their state, to hear a master of philosophy ‡. The diligence of more youthful disciples was, however, well secured by wise provisions, which verified the saying of Alanus de Insulis,—

“ De nuce fit corylus: de glande fit ardua quercus :
De parvo puero sæpe peritus homo §.”

Philip, Abbot of Good Hope in Hannonia, in the diocese of Cambrai, writes to Engelbert, who was at Paris, and exhorts him to persevere diligently in study, adding, “for not merely to have been at Paris, but at Paris to have acquired learning, is honourable—non enim Parisius fuisse, sed Parisius honestam scientiam acquisisse

* Pasquier, IX. 27.

† *Récherches de la France*, III. 29.

‡ *Vie d'Abailard*, lib. i.

§ *Alani de Insulis, liber Parabolarum*.

honestum est*.” Pope Alexander IV., writing to the masters and scholars of Paris, in 1256, mentions their ardour for study, “to which,” he says, “they have sacrificed every thing,” and of Paris he says, “Hence proceeds an illustrious progeny of doctors, a high race of learned men, by whom the Christian people are illuminated and the Catholic faith is strengthened†.”

Many of the disciples and masters of the middle ages might have said with Abailard, “I was so inflamed with the love of study, that, renouncing the pomp of military glory with the inheritance and privileges of my ancestors, I left the court of Mars that I might be educated in the bosom of Minerva‡.”

To form a notion of the enthusiasm which men of great intellectual powers excited in the schools, we must attend to a few details in the early life of that celebrated philosopher, before the tendency of his disputations was obnoxious to reproof. When, through the jealousy of Guillaume de Champeaux, his first master, he was obliged to remove from Paris to Melun, to give lessons on philosophy, such numbers flocked there to hear him that the classes of Paris seemed deserted: then, being encouraged by this admiration, he ventured to approach nearer to the capital, and opened classes at Corbeil, which is only five or six leagues distant from it, and thus the disciples of the two schools of Champeaux and Abailard could dispute in fresh combats. Guillaume de Champeaux, even after becoming a monk in St. Victor, continued to give his scholastic lessons, and to instruct a crowd of pupils in rhetoric, philosophy, and theology. Abailard, on returning from Brittany, used to frequent these lectures of his old master, notwithstanding the jealousy with which his triumphs had been received by him. Nevertheless his school of philosophy, on the hill of St. Geneviève, was opened, as he said in order that from that eminence he might batter his adversaries in the schools of the university, under Champeaux, at St. Victor. We have the letter of Folko to Abailard in these terms, “Rome, which used to infuse the science of all arts into hearers, sends her students to be instructed

* Budæus, Hist. Universit. Paris. tom. ii.

† Wadding Annales Minorum, tom. iv. an. 1257.

‡ Epist. l.

under you. No distance of country, no height of mountains, no depth of valleys, no road, however infested with dangers of all kinds, can detain those who are hastening to hear you. The interjacent sea and the terrible raging of the waves, doth not intimidate the crowd of English youths, who, despising all perils, flock hither on hearing of your name. Remote Brittany destines her animals to be nurtured here. The people of Angers, having overcome their wildness, converse with you in their sons: Poitou and Ireland, Normandy, Flanders, Germany, and Suabia, revere your genius; I omit mention of all inhabiting the city of Paris, as well as those from the most distant extremities of France, who so thirst to be taught by you, as if no discipline could be found where you are not." In this curious passage the facts are hardly exaggerated.

When Abailard, after his ignominious punishment, having renounced the world, had retired to St. Denis, where the abbot insisted upon his resuming his ancient exercises to satisfy the general anxiety to hear him again lecture, such a multitude of disciples flocked to hear him that there were not sufficient provisions in the country to support them. More than three thousand came together from all Latinity, from Italy, Germany, England, Spain, Flanders, Brittany, and all provinces of France. From this school came forth Guy du Châtel, soon afterwards Pope under the name of Celestin II., the famous Peter Lombard, Bishop of Paris, Gaudefrois, Bishop of Auxerre, and many of the cardinals and prelates of the Roman church. Abailard could reckon among his former scholars, twenty cardinals and more than fifty bishops. Such was the fascination of his manner, that he could not even get rid of those whom he wished to dismiss. After embracing the monastic state, he had changed his style and devoted himself wholly to divine subjects: thenceforth he made use of dialectics and philosophy only as a preparatory means of exciting attention, and from that time also he refused to take anything from his scholars.

The reader must not suppose that this enthusiasm, inspired by Abailard, was a novelty in the history of the schools. The epochs which had not witnessed similar examples, were, in fact, distinguished and deplored as forming exceptions; and the intervals between teachers,

of different degrees of merit undoubtedly, who attracted the same love and reverence, were, as we shall soon see, few and brief: in short the desire of intellectual riches played, in the middle ages, nearly the same part as that performed by the love of pleasure in later times; for as the public ways are now periodically thronged with those who, in brilliant equipage, follow dancers from theatre to theatre, as each capital can succeed to attract them with its gold, so used they formerly to witness the humble crowd of those who thirsted after the vision of truth, and who went, through love of it, from school to school, following, and on foot too for the most part, the renowned doctors and teachers of philosophy, who moved from city to city, as each could succeed to win them with its poverty and its love of Christ. How many dusty footed disciples followed Albert the great, who taught at Strasbourg, Ratisbon, Cologne, Paris, and Rome, having the same hearers in each city.

We read in an ancient chronicle of the north, that the nobles of those regions send their sons to Paris, and not only such of them as are to be promoted to clerical orders, but also those who are to be educated in secular things; and that these, being imbued with literature and the idiom of the tongue of that land, not only make great proficiency in arts but also in theology*.

Charles de Bourgueville, after studying at Caen, says that he removed, with some of his companions, to Angers and Poitiers, to pursue his studies successively at these two universities†.

We have a letter from Angelo Politian to John Teixeira, Chancellor of Portugal, giving an account of the progress of his sons, whom he had sent from that distant kingdom to study under him; "You have sent these boys into Italy," he says, "in order that they may be formed to manners, to letters, and to all ingenuous arts, befitting the highest fortune: but I believe they brought with them from home paternal manners, so that they do not so much receive as furnish examples. Nothing in them is foolish, nothing vicious, nothing immodest, nothing bad. Theirs is not a shameless front, an elate supercilious brow, a licentious eye, a sharp tongue, an

* Arn. Lub. iii. 5.

† De Bourgueville, *Récherches de Normandie*.

inconstant countenance. Finally, there is nothing in their air, or face, or gait, which can offend. Daily they frequent the churches. Towards their masters they are not only assiduous but full of alacrity: they conquer their more learned fellow-disciples in humanity and kindness, and they wholly refrain from associating with those whose manners or fame would injure them. No contest takes place between them except in study, no where are they oftener or more gladly occupied than under the eye of their preceptors, or in the company of their con-disciples *.”

The general opinion of the middle ages respecting the advantages which resulted from this custom of visiting different countries for the sake of study, which, indeed, we had occasion to notice in an earlier stage of our inquiry, is expressly adopted by Hugo de St. Victor, and as he tells us, from having himself experienced its truth. “A foreign land,” he says, “is conducive to Philosophy. It is a great beginning of virtue for the mind to learn by degrees to change these visible and transitory things, that afterwards it may also relinquish them. He is as yet delicate to whom his country is sweet. He is brave to whom every soil is his country. He is perfect to whom the whole world is a place of exile. The first fixes his love upon the world, the second scatters it, the last extinguishes it. I have been an exile from a boy, and I know with what grief the mind sometimes deserts the narrow space of a poor cottage, with what liberty afterwards it may despise marble courts and golden roofs †.” During ages of faith, however, innumerable things conspired to remove the sadness of banishment from the mind of a stranger scholar. The clean of heart could feel at home in every land, for their desires were fixed on God, every where present; and from the sources of purity and love, they could not be separated.

Strangers were, if possible, loaded with still greater favours than others in the schools of the middle ages. “Felix exilium,” exclaims John of Salisbury, alluding to Paris, “cui locus iste datur ‡.” Hear how John Vaseus, of Bruges, speaks of his own experience, “Certes

* Ang. Polit. Epist. lib. x.

† Hugo S. Victor Eruditiones Didascalice lib. iii. cap. 20.

‡ Joan. Salisb. Epist. 24.

the Spaniards received me not as a foreigner, though they are most gracious to foreigners, but as a fellow countryman, and as one too who had deserved well of his country. When I first began to profess publicly at Salamanca, with what zeal did the scholastics interpose with the Rector of the Academy that an honorary stipend might be decreed to me by the Senate, in which were but three persons opposed to me * !”

In fact, nations contended for the possession of learned men, with an incredible emulation ; all Spain exulted in retaining Dominicus Calagurretanus, the pride of the Palantinian university, Juliano Pomerinus, Joannes Gerundensis, Raymond of Barcelona, Garsias Hispalensis, Vincentius Ferrarius, Alfonso Tostado, Dominicus Soto, Melchior Canus, and others, who were the boast of Salamanca, Ludovicus Vives, the pride of Valentia, and Lupus Herrera, and Laurentius Balbus Liliensis, whom the Complutensian academy presented to the world †. Huber, in his sketches of Spain remarks, “ that learned men and philosophers in that country are looked up to as conferring dignity upon their respective provinces. Their acquirements are like a public treasure, only deposited in their hands for the honour of the city, shewn to strangers with a kind of patriotic pride, and defended zealously for the advantage of the neighbourhood.” The love and study of wisdom seemed even hereditary in many families. The noble house of Sancta Sophia at Padua, produced a continued series of philosophers and illustrious physicians. Such studies gave titles of nobility, as in the case of James Dondo, or Horologio, physician and astrologer, who left that name to his posterity, from having constructed the wonderous clock on the tower of the city. If a ruler in the middle ages could have had such a desire as that of Antoninus Pius, who took upon himself to prescribe the proper numbers, who should apply to each profession in different cities ; he could never have declined determining the number of philosophers, by alleging that Emperor’s reason, that, “ there were so few who philosophized.” The ambition of men of

* Joannis Vasæi Brugensis *Rer. Hispanicarum Chronic.* cap. iii.

† *De Academiis et Doctis Viris Hispaniæ Narratio Alfonsi Garsia Præfat.*

all professions, was then directed to the acquirement of this scholastic or universal wisdom. Lawyers, as well as physicians, were then justly entitled philosophers, as may be witnessed in William Durandus, who was a great poet in the vulgar tongue of Provence, a great theologian, as well as legist and practitioner at the bar; his *Speculum Juris* having as much authority in law as the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard had in theology. In fact, as our old English writers upon law observe, the office of judges was then one of the contemplative life, for they used to sit in court till twelve o'clock, when they dined, and the rest of the day they tell us was devoted to contemplation. The love of wisdom, which belonged to the clean of heart, shone conspicuous in the ranks even of feudal nobility. Jovianus Pontanus says, "that in his old age, after a long life spent in great affairs, he considers it a subject of boast that he had seen such a man as Andrew Matthew Aquaviva, Duke of Adria, who was slain in 1503; a Prince philosophizing in the midst of wars, combining ducal rank and imperial cares, with literary labours, and investigations of nature, both with dignity, neither without its peculiar beauty and praise. This nobleman and philosopher was of such piety that he seemed intent every hour of his life on repairing or building churches, assisting the poor and relieving the oppressed, so that the hereditary piety of the house of Aquaviva, one of the seven principal families of the kingdom of Naples, having been illustrious in the seventh century, and eminent in the crusades, which has given also a martyr to the society of Jesus, seemed to have attained an increase in him. Amidst all his occupations of learning, for he gave editions of many books, he used to visit monasteries in order to edify his mind by conversations with saints; and many religious houses had splendid proofs of his munificence*."

Reader, here break we off suddenly, for I perceive there approaches to us as if through dim aisles afar, an august procession, which will attract and charm every eye. There are about to pass before us some great shadows of the clean of heart, who, even while on earth beheld God, and who, as philosophers, were deemed wonderful by revering nations.

* Paul Ant. de Tarsia Hist. Cupersanensium, lib. ii.

To hope for a view of all, or for a narrow scrutiny of any, would be inconsistent with the limits allotted for the completion of a course, in which we may not linger ; but a hasty glance at some of the most prominent of the sapient throng, for wisdom upon earth, splendours of cherubic light will be attainable with aid of former guides, who have been accustomed to conduct upon this way men of less insight into the spirits that are past with time.

CHAPTER VI.

THE lofty lights which minister to Holy Church have long been passing, when those which illuminated the middle ages come first in view ; Justin Martyr, Clemens, Augustin, Gregory, Athanasius, had been followed by an unbroken line of sages, who, on their way to Paradise, having had their hearts made pure, philosophized in the school of the Cross, diffusing around them beams of a celestial radiance. In combating the early heresies, the Church found the importance of having dialectic force at command, and therefore accepted the service of the Stagyrte. Nemesius, Bishop of Emessa in Phœnicia, in the year 380, followed him in his anthropological writings, and the Roman Boethius in the fifth age, whose work, "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*," written in prison in Pavia, was received with general admiration, kings, as our Alfred, giving versions of it in their respective languages, translated and commentated many of his treatises, as also some of those of Plato and Porphyry. By him was the knowledge of Aristotle propagated in the west. This holy sage, whom Scot Erigena styles *Magnificum Boethium* *, together with Cassiodorus, and other lovers of wisdom of that time, adopted in union, many expressions and thoughts of both Plato and Aristotle. In Spain, under the west Goths, Isidore, Archbishop of Seville, promoted encyclopædical studies through his work on etymologies, as did in England the Venerable Bede, whose learning was prodigious, while his industry and ability were great in all branches of study. In the east

* *De Div. Nat.* I. 56.

an acquaintance with the philosophy of the Greeks was more prevalent. Jacob, of Edessa, translated into Syriac the dialectic writings of Aristotle ; the study of whose philosophy was also greatly promoted by the writings of John Philoponus, and of St. John Damascene *. In the fifth century science began to decay in France, nor did it revive till the time of Charlemagne, yet in this fifth age we find not a small number of great and learned men in every department, theologians, philosophers, historians, mathematicians, physicians, poets, and orators. Although in the fifth and sixth centuries, after the infusion of the Germanic barbarians into Gaul, there was little spirit of original enquiry, we have great characters, presenting the high personality belonging to an heroic race. The whole history of this period is comprised in the biographies of saintly bishops and priests, the heroes of Christianity, of that time, who, in believing, nourished such a flame of holy love, that all the world still re-echoes with their praise. The literature also of that period consists chiefly in these biographies, for Christianity had penetrated so deeply into the human nature that all things were in life. The times were too stormy, indeed, for the study of philosophy to make much progress ; but great and pious and heroic men abounded : they had no leisure or inclination to speculate—they held the Christian truth more in the unity of sentiment and feeling than in the defensive form of science. Glorious bishops and lights benign of this period, were Remi of Rheims, Avitus of Vienna, Rurich of Limoges, Cæsarius of Arles, Eleutherus of Tournai, Cyprian of Toulon, Ferreolus of Uzez, Germain of Paris, Viventius of Lyons, Nicetus of Treves, Marius of Avench, Pretextatus of Rouen, Veronus of Cavaillon, Gregory of Tours, and Fortunatus of Poitiers †. The Church had yielded the elect during eight centuries, when the great spirits which are now about to pass before us as representatives of the clean of heart beholding God, came forth to sanctify and guide the world.

In surveying the history of the philosophy of the middle ages from the year 800 till the seventeenth century,

* Tennemann Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie.

† Staudenmaier, Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. I.

we find that there are certain epochs easily determinable, which must guide us in the order of observation. To the first period, which Tenneman distinguished as that which felt the reign of pure realism, belong the many splendours which here come into view, whose radiance we discerned from a distance, while observing in a former Book those, who, through meekness, possessed the intellectual riches of the earth. Alcuin, or Albin, whose name alone is sufficient to disprove the opinions of those, who speak of the darkness of that age is the first of the majestic figures in this procession. York, in 736, beheld his birth—Parma, while he was travelling to Rome with Sanbald, his Archbishop, his first interview with Charlemagne, who there invited and persuaded him to reside in his kingdom. On his removal thither, he was accompanied by some of his scholars, as assistants in teaching the Trivium and Quadrivium, of whom Wizo, Fredegisus, Agobard, and Sigulf, are specified. When the schools were established, Alcuin had among other disciples three brethren of the imperial house, Adelhard, Bernarius, and Wala, sons of Bernhard, the brother of Pepin; the first was Abbot of Corby, and was succeeded by his brother Wala. Not so learned as Bede, though, perhaps, a more profound thinker, he is decidedly after him the first remarkable man of the Germanic Christian world, and the soul of all the noble enterprises of Charlemagne for the civilization of the West. He evinced no great speculative talent—his efforts being all directed to practical Christianity; his chief work of a different nature was his treatise *De Ratione Animæ*, which he dedicated to Gundrada, a sister of the Abbot Adelhard and a relation of the Emperor.

Among the eminent disciples grouped around him, we may distinguish Raban Maur, afterwards Abbot of Fulda, and Archbishop of Mainz, in which city he was born in 776, who introduced Alcuin's dialectics into Germany; Hatto, who succeeded Raban at Fulda; Samuel, a master in the same abbey, then Abbot of Lorsch, and finally Bishop of Worms; Haimon, Bishop of Halberstadt; Adelbert, Abbot of Ferrieres, and Aldrich, Archbishop of Sens. The rest belong to the great schools of the ninth century, which were Fulda, St. Gall, Reichenau, in the diocese of Constance, Hirschau, in that of Spire, and Corbie in Piccardy; which were all the centres of other

schools. Paschasius Radbert, Adelhard the younger, Hildemann, and Odo, Warin, founder of new Corby, and Anscharius, the Apostle of the North, were all from Corby in Piccardy. The throng which follows is composed of the eminent philosophers of the ninth age: these are Bertold, the monk of Mici; Jonas, Bishop of Orleans; the Holy Smaragdus; Frothar, Bishop of Toul; Walafrid Strabo, Abbot of Reichenau; Freulf, Bishop of Lisieux; Ebbon, Archbishop of Rheims; Amolon, Archbishop of Lyons; Liutbert, Abbot of Hirschau; Andradus, Chorbishop of Sens; Aldrich, Bishop of Mans; Probus, Monk of St. Alban's; Florus diaconus, Prudentius, Bishop of Troyes, and John Scot Erigena, for whose birth-place three kingdoms contended. This slender figure of stature, very diminutive is he. Tennemann, concludes, that Ireland—Staudenmaier, that England gave him birth. Brought into France by Charles le Chauve, whose court he afterwards left, and as some say, by constraint, on account of the offence which was taken at certain opinions, or at the too subtle manner of his philosophizing, he finally returned to England, where he died, 'according to some at Oxford in 886, while the more common belief is, that he was murdered by some scholars at Malmesbury, in proof of which his epitaph is cited; for at one time on his tomb these lines were inscribed,

“Conditus hoc tumulo sanctus Sophista Johannes,
Qui ditatus erat vivens jam dogmate miro;
Martyrio tandem meruit conscendere cælum,
Quo semper cuncti regnant per sæcula sancti.”

William of Malmesbury relates, “that the monks venerated his bones almost as much as those of St. Aldelm.” In fact, Anastasius, in his letter to Charles the Bald, styles him “*virum per omnia sanctum.*” The constant tradition of the middle ages, till Mabillon wrote, was that Erigena had been called to England from the court of Charles the Bald, by Alfred, that he taught in Oxford, and was slain at Malmesbury by revolted scholars. Staudenmaier supposes, that he owed the name Erigena to his having only studied in Ireland, while another recent historian is convinced that his writings furnish intrinsic evidence that he was Irish born. What we know with certainty, however, respect-

ing him, is the extent of his learning, which included the oriental tongues, his love for the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, and the importance which he ascribed to philosophy in general, as the knowledge of the grounds of all things. Scot, notwithstanding his unhappy rashness, had a clear penetrating intelligence, but along with that acuteness, which made him the chief of dialecticians, he united a deep interior religious feeling, so that his mysticism is as remarkable as his dialectics. His life was spent in contemplation, while his manners were spotless and pure; his activity was exercised in speculative theology: through his influence and example the study of the Greek philosophy became prevalent in the West. His opinion respecting Plato * and Aristotle, has been mentioned before; the Fathers he prized immensely, especially Dionysius the Areopagite, to whose view was shown clearest the nature and the ministry angelical while yet in flesh he dwelt; him he styled, “magnum et divinum manifestatorem;” and by means of his translation of the work on the Celestial Hierarchy, a fountain of mysticism was opened for the middle ages. Alluding to St. Gregory Nazianzen and his commentator Maximus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustin, he says, “it is not for us to judge the intelligence of the holy fathers, but to receive them piously with veneration, yet we are not forbidden to choose that which may seem most consonant with the divine language.”

Unhappily he laid too much stress upon the subtleties of human philosophy. William of Malmesbury says, “that his great work *De Divisione Naturæ*, on account of its solving the perplexity of some questions, is very useful, if we pardon his deviating in some things from the Latins, while fixing his eyes intensely upon the Greeks; therefore, he has been thought heretical; and Florus wrote against him, for, in fact, there are in this work many things, which, unless they were diligently discussed, might seem abhorrent from the faith of Catholics†.” This work, in the form of a dialogue between a master and his pupil, was the first philosophic and theological system seen in the west. As in the thirteenth century, the Albigenses thought fit to pretend that it favoured their opinions, though it is clear they did not

* *De Divis. Nat.* i. 33.

† *In lib.* v.

understand it, and as at all events it opened a dangerous door for the pride of human reason, Pope Honorius III. caused all copies of it to be sought for and burnt. His work on the Eucharist has been long lost, and the critical researches respecting it have only rendered the nature of its contents more undiscoverable. Paschasius Radbert, Monk at Corby in Piccardy, and in 844, after the deposition of Wala, Abbot of that cloister, sent to the monks of the recently founded abbey of New Corby, in Germany, a treatise on the mystery of the Eucharist, in which he seemed anxious to elevate faith to knowledge. In this respect, Staudenmaier thinks that he opened a way to the perverse, and some suppose that Scot merely wrote against certain expressions in that work, and that it was not his intention to teach any doctrine, but that which the Church has always held.

Fredegard, a monk of Corby, was the first to take offence at Radbert's work, and thirty years after a controversy arose respecting it, in which Raban Maur, Matramnus, Erigena, Haimo, and an unknown writer took part; but what opinion Erigena held we cannot discover. It is more improbable than probable that his work still existed in the eleventh century, and that it was really his work which Berenger cited as his *. It was at all events condemned at the council of Vercelli in 1050, and at Paris, under King Henry the First, but the person of Scot has been always held in respect, as his errors were without pertinacity. "In no manner," says Staudenmaier, "did he evince indifference to the Church in his researches, but on the contrary, he more than all things loved and prized it; so that his errors are not to be ascribed to his will, but to the strong passion for knowledge, which can mislead men when they pursue objects with impetuosity, from particular points of view†." The ancient writers invariably mention him with a certain affection, "*Potuit errare,*" say they, "*hæreticus esse noluit.*" Throughout the middle ages his memory was cherished, as one entitled to esteem and respect, perhaps, however, chiefly on the ground of his translations. He had the glory of having Hugo of St. Victor for his commentator, and of having his writings fre-

* Laufs Theol. Studien. and Kritiken, l. 755—80.

† John Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit.

quently mentioned by Richard of St. Victor, who evinced a familiar acquaintance with them.

Now, if the mind's eye pass from light to light, further on and still within this first great family, we may distinguish the deep discerning Gerbert, monk of Aurillac, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., who studied at Seville and Cordova, and taught in the schools of Bobbio, Rheims, Aurillac, Tours, and Sens : then follows the hallowed spirit of Lanfranc, born at Pavia, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. "To know all the admirable talents and genius of Lanfranc," says Orderic Vitalis, "one ought to be Herodian in grammar, Aristotle in dialectics, Cicero in rhetoric, Augustin and Jerome, or some other doctor of the law and of grace in the Holy Scriptures. Athens in her glory would have honoured Lanfranc, and would have desired to be instructed by his wise precepts*." With him we must notice the Cardinal Peter Damian, from Ravenna, whose skilful use of dialectics in theology was called for by the heretical publication of Berenger. This jewel that is next, lustrous and costly, which great renown hath left, and not to perish, is St. Anselm, the disciple of Lanfranc, a light to marvel at, born at Aosta, in Piemont, elected Prior and Abbot of Bec, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; he was called by his contemporaries the second Augustin, in regard to the penetration and dialectic skill with which he pursued religious philosophy. His "*Monologium* or *Exemplum Meditandi de Ratione Fidei*," is a work in which he unites the learning of God and of divine things with the grounds and principles of natural reason. Of extensive erudition, but still more distinguished for his dialectic power, comprehensive in his views, and as remarkable for acuteness, clear in his conceptions, and connected in all his reasonings, St. Anselm laid the foundation of the scholastic metaphysics. Albericus says, in his *Chronicle* of the year 1060, "that philosophy came to the Gauls in the days of the illustrious men, Lanfranc and Anselm." Hildebert of Lavardin, Archbishop of Tours, stands next after Anselm in acuteness and dialectic ability; but he is thought to have excelled him in clearness and harmonious cultivation of mind. He united a singular mental cultivation, familiarity with the classics, indepen-

* Hist. Nor. lib. iv.

dence, taste, and sound practical understanding ; his *Tractatus Theologicus*, often ascribed to Hugo of St. Victor, and his *Moralis Philosophia*, formed the first popular system of theology. More versed in mysticism were those we next see,—Othlo, a monk in the cloister of S. Emmeran, in 1090, and Honorius of Aut, near Basel, who were inclined to the Neoplatonic Augustinian theology. Now come into view the great luminaries of the second period of the scholastic philosophy, comprising the contest between nominalism and realism, from Roscellin, at the end of the eleventh century, till Alexander of Hales. The use of dialectics, and especially the explanation of Porphyry's *Commentary upon Aristotle's Organon*, *περι πεντε φωνων* ; the various meanings of the Platonic and Aristotelian schools respecting metaphysics, gave rise to the division of nominalist and realist, which partly following Plato, partly Aristotle, conduced to the further exercise of dialectic acuteness ; this began with John Roscellin, a Breton by birth, and a canon of Compiègne or of Beauvais, in 1089, who maintained that general ideas were nothing but names or words, *flatus vocis*. This led him to an heretical interpretation of the Trinity, which he was obliged to recant at Soissons in 1092, having, in addition to his misfortunes, suffered himself to calumniate Lanfranc, Anselm, and Robert d'Arbrissel*.

The scholastics divide this controversy into the two heads of *universalia ante rem*, and the *universalia in re* or *post rem*. To show the manner in which the general was involved in the individual, stood forth the celebrated dialectitian, William de Champeaux, who died in 1120 as Bishop of Chalons, with his scholar and adversary, Peter Abailard, of the school of Paris. The latter was a grammarian, orator, poet, musician, philosopher, theologian, mathematician, jurisconsult ; he knew five or six languages, he played on instruments, he was ignorant of nothing in history, sacred or profane. It is consoling to know that, if the first period of his life shows him dark and turbulent, the last beheld him amongst the cleansed, reflecting beams of the celestial vision. Some perhaps, through a fond desire of defending him throughout, have asserted that jealousy first incited Alberic and Lotulphe to send his book, "*Introduction to Theology*,"

* Longuevalle *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* viii.

as heretical, before the Archbishop of Rheims, who, on their representation, invited Conon, Bishop of Palestrina, the Pope's legate, to assist at the council about to be held at Soissons. Abailard was summoned to appear there and answer for his opinions respecting the Trinity, which he had attempted to explain by natural reason. So exasperated was the public mind against him, that, on his arrival, his person was not thought quite secure from popular violence. After appearing before the legate, who was a mild and holy man but not a deep scholastic, the matter was referred to the Archbishop of Rheims, who, being of similar character to the legate, referred it to his theologians, who, as some remark, were the personal rivals of Abailard. Yet Alberic and Lotulphe were unable to fix upon any sentence of the book that could be produced in evidence before a council, so they demanded that the fathers should proceed with other affairs, postponing this question to the last, but as the legate gave permission to Abailard to preach before the people during this interval, the public mind became quite changed in his regard, and he was now the object of general admiration.

On the last day of the council the legate declared that he should be absolved and dismissed. Geofroi, Bishop of Chartres, a man of eminent piety and learning, made a noble discourse in his favour, in which he reminded the assembly that all great geniuses are exposed to envy, and recommended, either that Abailard should be permitted to speak in his own defence, or else that he should be sent back to his abbey of St. Denis, where a greater number of doctors might be assembled, and more time allowed to come to a decision on a question of such importance. The contrary opinion however prevailed, and the assembly judged, that his having taught and published without express permission, was enough to warrant his condemnation. Geofroi of Chartres saw the danger, and being unable to ward it off, withdrew.

Abailard was cited to come forward—a brazier stood in the midst. It was announced to him that he was required to burn his book with his own hands; at the same time it was presented to him, and he, without uttering a word, threw it into the fire. The assistants were astonished at such a proceeding, and upon a certain prelate wishing to excuse it, saying that there were such

and such expressions in the book, Terricus, an able theologian, smiled and repeated some words from the creed of St. Athanasius, which justified the sentence.

Abailard, being condemned; was committed to the hands of the Abbot of St. Medard, of Soissons, and the assembly broke up, to the great vexation of his friends, who intimated that the injustice was so palpable, and the neglect of formalities so un-canonical, that no importance was attached to the decision. Abailard, it is said, felt this stroke more keenly than his former punishment, of which he acknowledged the justice, but he was now in the hands of the best of men: the abbot and monks of St. Medard left nothing untried to console him. They assured him that the late proceedings would not injure him, and, in fact, the legate immediately restored him to liberty and permitted him to return to St. Denis.

His books continued to be read by all the world, and it was not till after many years that the dispute was resumed, first by a Benedictine monk, Guillaume, Abbot of St. Thierry, near Rheims, the intimate friend of St. Bernard. This man, on reading the work, was offended at certain passages, and immediately referred it to Geoffrey, Bishop of Chartres, and to St. Bernard. To his letter, which was passionate, the Bishop made no answer, and St. Bernard replied in very few words, that delay was necessary, and that this was the first intimation he had heard of the kind. Unfortunately the Bishop died in the interim, and Guillaume presented a list of heretical errors which he thought could be drawn from the work, which list St. Bernard read. Being moved with zeal for religion, he first went to Abailard and warned him secretly, but not finding full satisfaction he returned, with two or three witnesses, and still found a man inflexible and resolved to defend himself. Soon after this St. Bernard wrote to the Pope, Innocent II., denouncing him as a dangerous person, and in league with Arnold of Brescia. It is to be lamented that such an opinion should have been entertained on the credit of this treatise of Guillaume, for Abailard had no connexion whatever with Arnold, and throughout his writings not a word could ever be found disrespectful towards the Holy See.

There was to be a great assembly held at Sens, in 1140, on occasion of the translation of certain relics,

and Abailard thought that this would be a proper occasion to justify himself, for which purpose he wrote to Henry, the Archbishop of Sens, complaining of the abbot of Clairvaux, and requesting permission to meet him in person, before the council, and to defend himself. The archbishop acceded and wrote to St. Bernard inviting him to attend. St. Bernard, but for the remonstrances of his friends, would have declined engaging in this public dispute, on the ground of not being accustomed to scholastic arguments, and of not thinking it right to have the mysteries of faith made an object of discussion; but he at length consented, and went to the council, relying only on the justice of his intentions, and on the help which he expected from God. The assembly was most august. The King Louis-le-jeune, Guillaume Count of Nevers, Thibaut Count Palatine, the Archbishops of Sens and Rheims, with several other bishops, and a multitude of learned doctors, were present. St. Bernard, as the aggressor, spoke first, but before he had finished, Abailard, to the astonishment of all, without attempting a defence, said aloud that he appealed to Rome. His friends gave out that this unexpected resolution arose from his fearing that the influence of St. Bernard, and of the previous accusations brought against him, would have necessarily led to his condemnation. The council was embarrassed, but as he had chosen it for judge, it selected fourteen propositions from those of which he was accused, and condemned them, but without comprising his person in the sentence.

His friends failed not to observe that none of the precautions were taken which are always observed by canonical councils in condemning a point of doctrine, since no time was allowed for consulting the holy fathers, and for deliberating in particular congregations, and hearing opinions, before submitting the question to the prelates. They pretended also that there was no care evinced to discover whether he really taught such errors; most of them, it is said, are no where found in his writings; but before the invention of printing it was easy to be deceived, for copyists often made an author say the contrary of what he intended, by omitting a letter, or stop, or point of interrogation. Mezerai remarks also, that St. Bernard, whose natural eloquence nourished only, as he said himself, amidst rocks and forests, ani-

mated with the Spirit of God, was far more powerful than the vain rhetoric of the schools, was drawn on to speak and write against Abailard, more through aversion for scholastic disputes, and with a view to shew the danger of subtilties, than from any other cause.

Abailard retired from Sens, and wrote two apologies containing his profession of faith. He declared that he had never wished to be a philosopher opposed to the great Apostle, or had set more value upon being a second Aristotle, as he was styled, than on being a Christian, which he was by the grace of Jesus Christ. He remarks that it is difficult to write much without exposing oneself to censure; and he protests that he is ready to renounce whatever opinion may be found contrary to the Church, whose son he is, and from whose unity he prays that he may be never separated. He was about to set out for Rome, to defend his cause, when he received intelligence that he had been already condemned. After great perplexity and wavering, he resolved, trusting to the sincerity of his intentions, upon continuing his journey to defend himself in person before the holy see; but having stopped for a night at Cluny, he was induced to abandon this resolution, by the advice of Peter the Venerable, who undertook to bring the affair to a happy issue. This learned and holy abbot, who had long admired him by reputation, was now filled with delight on observing the beauty of his genius and the depth of his understanding. It was he who gave this testimony of him: "*Non homini, sed scientiæ deest quod nescivit.*" Still more was he charmed with the piety which he joined to his extraordinary abilities, and with the proofs which his conversation furnished that he loved only God, and wished to love no other but him. He now promised to deliver him from all his afflictions, on condition that he would remain at Cluny for the rest of his life. Finding him at a loss and perplexed, he took him by the hand and led him into a more secret chamber; and there, sitting down, said, "Hear me a little: what do you leave in quitting this stormy scene? You will find new calumniators; you will be always in disputes and combats, either attacking, or defending yourself. Is such a life conducive to salvation? and is it not time, at sixty years of age, to renounce every thing but the great affair of eternity? Believe me, my dear Abailard, it is Provi-

dence who has conducted you here to find repose for your last days ; and do not suppose that you will be useless : my brethren will profit by your learning, and will regard you as their master. Here you will have no one to envy you, and here you can close your tumultuous life in sweet heavenly peace." The philosopher was won ;—for him was about to commence gladness everlasting. Peter the Venerable wrote to the Pope ; but in the interim a happy incident occurred, in the arrival of Rainard, Abbot of Cîteaux, and general of the order, a man of eminent piety and learning, who had a few years before succeeded St. Stephen. He was the son of Milon, count of Barsur-Seine, and he came mounted on a sorry horse, with one poor brother for all his suite. It is thought that he came at the desire of St. Bernard, to speak to Abailard of reconciliation ; at least the abbot of Cluny employed him for the purpose, and sent Abailard under his conduct to Clairvaux, where they arrived at the end of September, 1140, four months after the council of Sens. Abailard explained on what ground he had advanced the propositions ; and the saint was so convinced of the purity of his faith, that they both embraced and vowed an eternal friendship. Peter the Venerable testified the utmost joy, and, in order to inform the Pope of what had passed, sent two of his monks to Rome with letters from himself and from Abailard. In these he assured him that the latter had renounced for ever the disputes of the schools, and that the whole community of Cluny prostrated itself at the feet of his holiness, to beseech him to approve of his remaining in that monastery to the end of his life. The Pope granted this permission, and expressed joy at such an issue of so unhappy a debate ; and thus ended the troubles of this great man, who may perhaps have been treated with undue severity, considering the service which he rendered at the time by his writings against the Petrobrusians, Jacobites, Cathari, Henricians, Adamites, and other monstrous sects ; though his warmest advocates admit that he ought, for the sake of peace, to have been content to speak the usual language when he held the common doctrine ; for it is allowed that he expressed himself, on some points, in a new and unguarded manner ; and that some of the propositions which he really held were erroneous and untenable ; but no man was ever farther from having the obstinacy and

pride of a heretic, since he constantly confessed an inviolable attachment and perfect submission to the authority of the holy see.

On receiving the abbot of Cluny's letter, the Pope testified his joy, sent absolution to Abailard, and reinstated him in all his rights and prerogatives; and from that time his life was spent in exercises of piety and preparation for his end. Peter the Venerable, alluding to his subsequent conduct, said that there was never greater nakedness in St. Martin, or more humility in St. Germain. In his room were only a pallet, with table and chair, a wooden candlestick, and a crucifix. The Holy Scriptures, and some treatises of the Fathers, formed all his library. His manner was that of the lowest brother in the community. When charged to give instructions, he spoke only of humility and contempt of the world. It was already a citizen of heaven who spoke the language of the celestial country. Attacked with a cutaneous disorder, the abbot, by advice of physicians, sent him for change of air to the priory of St. Marcel, near Châlons-sur-Saone, and only three or four leagues distant from Cluny; but the keenness of that air, by affording him temporary relief, only hastened his dissolution. On being seized with fever, he knew that it announced his end. After a devout preparation, he expired on the 21st of April, 1142, in the sixty-third year of his age. Peter the Venerable, in the epitaph which he wrote for him, after describing the multiplicity of his knowledge and the subtilty of his genius, added,—

“ ————— sed tunc magis omnia vicit
Cum Cluniacensem monachum, moremque professus,
Ad Christi veram transivit philosophiam.”

This history has detained us long, but it was well to ascertain the facts relative to a name so illustrious, and which is often made use of for purposes of hostility. The crowd which now presses forward consists of his disciples, of which the foremost are William de Conches and Guilbert de la Porre, bishop of Poitiers, and of their opponents—far greater spirits—Hugo of St. Victor, his illustrious disciple Richard of St. Victor, Hugo of Amiens, archbishop of Rouen, the two Englishmen—Robert Pulleyn and Robert Folioth of Melun, Peter of

Novara the Lombard, and bishop of Paris, his disciple Peter of Poitiers, who died archbishop of Embrun in 1205, and, though last not least, Alanus de Insulis, entitled Doctor Universalis, who died in 1203.

Hugo of St. Victor was by birth a Saxon, of the family of the Counts of Blankenburg and Regenstein, in the Hartz Forest. He was born in 1097, and educated in the monastery at Halberstadt, founded by his uncle Reinhard, bishop of that see*. In his eighteenth year he removed to St. Victor in Paris, where he remained till his death, in the forty-fourth year of his age. Of him we shall often have occasion to speak. Richard, endowed by nature with still greater genius, was the dearest friend and scholar of Hugo of St. Victor, and he died as prior of that monastery in 1173. Alanus de Insulis was of immense renown in the university of Paris, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Of him, too, is related a memorable legend, which ancient painters may have rendered familiar to the lovers of their art. He had proposed, on a certain day, to preach on the blessed Trinity, and to give a perfect knowledge of that mystery to his auditors. On the preceding day, as he took a solitary walk on the margin of the stream, he saw a little boy scooping out a small trench, and trying to fill it with water from a shell, which escaped through the sandy bottom of the trench as fast as he filled it. "What are you doing, my sweet child?" asked Alanus. "I am going to put all the water of the river into my trench," was the reply. "And when do you think," continued the philosopher, "that you will succeed in this grand design?" "I shall succeed before you will perform what you have engaged to do." "What have I engaged, child?" "Why you said that tomorrow you would, in a sermon, explain the Trinity by your science." Alanus, at this reply, was seized with compunction and terror. He returned home in deep meditation, pondering upon the words so strangely addressed to him, and lamenting bitterly his own presumption. On the morrow, when the hour of the sermon arrived, a great crowd being assembled, Alanus mounted the pulpit, and, instead of a theme, uttered these words: "*Sufficiat vobis vidisse*

* Liebner, Hugo von S. Victor und die Red. Richtungen seiner Zeit.

Alanum :” and immediately descending, withdrew, leaving the people lost in astonishment. The same day he left Paris and travelled into Burgundy, where he repaired to the abbey of Citeaux and offered himself as a poor lay brother to be a shepherd, and there he remained for a long time unknown. After many years, when the abbot Peter was about to set out for Rome to attend the council, this poor servant asked permission to accompany him, saying that he would take charge of his horses. The abbot consented, and they arrived at Rome together. On the day of the great disputation, when the abbot was proceeding to the council, Alanus, being still at his side, asked whether he might enter along with him; but the abbot, in reply, told him to return to the stable and attend to the horses, saying that none but bishops and abbots and great clerks were admitted; but he entreated him to suffer him to glide in disguised at his side; and the abbot consenting, he passed and sat down at his feet, and heard the disputation with the Albigenes and Waldenses. The heretics appearing at one moment to triumph, Alanus rose and said to the Abbot, “Jube Domine benedicere;” to whom the other replied in amaze, “Madman, what art thou doing?” Then again he said meekly, “Jube Domine benedicere;” and repeated these words thrice, till the Pope, observing what passed, called upon him to speak; when he began with such perspicacity and force of dialectics to confute the heretics, that immediately the error became evident to every one present. “Aut diabolus es aut Alanus!” exclaimed the furious disputant, finding himself worsted. “Non sum ego diabolus sed Alanus,” calmly replied the stranger. Thus was he discovered; and who can describe the scene which then took place? The abbot would have resigned his dignity to him on the spot, and the Pope Alexander wished to confer great honours upon him; but he refused them all, and returned to his abbey. It was decreed, however, that he should have always two clerks under him to write down what he might dictate, and there he made many books; amongst them that which begins “Phoebo Phœbe,” and a commentary on the prophecies of Merlin. Alanus died, and was buried in that abbey, and on his tomb were these verses :—

“ Alanum brevis hora brevi tumulto sepelivit,
 Qui duo, qui septem, totam sibi subdidit orbem.
 Labentis sæcli contemptis rebus egens fit,
 Mille ducenteno nonageno quoque quarto
 Christo devotus mortales exuit artus *.”

Amidst thousands of splendours now presented, we can but seek to distinguish few by name whose light still gilds our stormy scene on earth. The work of Peter Lombard obtained for him the title of Master of the Sentences. It was a classified compilation from the fathers, which became the text-book and model for subsequent theologians. The university of Paris celebrated every year his anniversary, as its founder, in the church of St. Marcel, where his bones reposed. Petrus Comestor, author of the Scholastic History, and Galterus, who wrote the poem on the Life of Alexander, were his contemporaries; but what have extorted the admiration of modern philosophers were the humane and philosophic mind of Hugo of St. Victor, who was also styled the second Augustin, the philosophic penetration and mysticism of Richard of St. Victor, the copious and lucid classification of Pulleyn, comprising both dogmas and truths of reason, and the exact mathematical applications of Alanus.

We must not suffer to pass here unobserved the eternal light of Sigebert, a monk of Gemblou in the diocese of Liege, born in 1030. Gemblou was an abbey, famous for its studies and its library. He wrote in prose and verse, knew Greek and Hebrew, possessed a universal science, and was withal of most holy life—*morum probitate et scientiæ multiplicitate laudabilis*. Monks and clerks flocked to his lectures in the school of St. Vincent at Metz, whence he finally returned to his abbey of Gemblou. As his diocese was most attached to the emperors, he could not avoid taking part in the controversy which then divided Europe; but he was careful to recognize for the successors of St. Peter those whom the church received as such; and though he wrote some things in his Chronicle little to the honour of some sovereign pontiffs, he relates with impartiality the vices and errors on the other side, sparing not the emperor. Sigebert

* Bulæus, Hist. Univers. Paris. tom. ii.

was loved by all the learned of his time, and respected even by the Jews during his residence at Metz. He died in the abbey of Gemblou, and his obit is thus inscribed in the tables of that house: "*Dominus Sigebertus venerabilis monachus, Gemblœcensis Cænobii, vir in omni scientia literarum, incomparabilis ingenii, descriptor præcedentium temporum*". Baronius, however, and Bulæus, convict him of some errors†. The ornaments with which he enriched his abbey were acquired by the voluntary liberality of those whom he instructed.

The religious philosophy gained by the writings of these wondrous men; and the supernatural school, as Tennemann styles it, was every where triumphant, under its chiefs St. Bernard and Walter, abbot of St. Victor, who composed his celebrated book, *Contra Quatuor Labyrinthos Galliæ*. John of Salisbury, or Johannes Parvus Salisberiensis, the disciple of Abailard, is one who also claims especial notice. He became bishop of Chartres. An admirer of Aristotle, and deeply versed in classical learning, he saw, also, the faults of the philosophic studies of his time, the occasional abuse of dialectics in the pursuit of minute and useless questions, which eventually led Simon of Tournay, Amalric of Bene, in the diocese of Chartres, and his disciple David of Dinanto, to adopt errors destructive of faith, bordering upon a kind of pantheism, to which they may have been led by an injudicious use of the writings of Scotus Erigena‡. But this abuse had the good effects of leading to greater caution, and to more insight into the danger of misusing reason.

The third period, the exclusive reign of Realism, commenced in 1240, with the writings of Alexander of Hales, at the moment when to human eyes there was every probability of its decline and overthrow. The Aristotelian philosophy was destined now to play a great part in the schools. Hermannus Contractus, the monk of St. Gall, was not the first commentator or translator of the Stagyrte in the west; for a hundred years before him Rein-

* Hist. Lit. de la France, ix.

† Hist. Univers. Paris. tom. ii. 41.

‡ Gerson de Concordia *Metaphysicæ cum Logica*, p. iv. S. Thom. Aq. in Lib. Sent. ii. dist. 17. q. 1. a. 1. Alberti Sum. i. p. Tract. iv. q. 20. vi. 29. xviii. 70.

hard, scholastic in the abbey of St. Burchard in Wirzburg, had laboured in that capacity *. His writings had been diffused in the west in the time of Charlemagne, from Constantinople through the Greeks, and subsequently from Spain through the Moors. The love of knowledge and science which distinguished the Arabians had been greatly encouraged and promoted by the caliphs of the houses of Abasside, Al Mansur, Al Mohdi, Harun Al Raschid, contemporary of Charlemagne, Al Mamum, and Moteassem, by means of translating Greek authors and founding schools and libraries. Aristotle, in spite of the authority of the Koran, had directed all their studies of philosophy, under the guidance of Avicenna and Averroes, whose commentaries, however, had nearly superseded the original. The latter seems to have considered the Koran only as a religion for the people, which did not supersede the necessity for a more scientific system for the learned. The philosophy of the Arabians became known to the Christians chiefly through the Jews, who at that time played no unimportant part in the learned world, as the example of Moses Maimonides of Cordova can bear witness. These learned Jews translated the Arabic writings into Hebrew, from which Latin versions were soon formed, which circulated in the universities of Europe. The first translator of Arabic writings was the monk Constantine, named Africanus from the country of his birth. After many long journeys through the east, and strange varieties of fate, he at length sought and found eternal rest in the abbey of Monte Cassino, where he made known the results of his wanderings, and published translations of the medicinal works of the Arabs, and by these were the works of Hippocrates and Galen made known to the west. This was in the middle of the eleventh century. Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., was another who greatly contributed to propagate the Arabic learning in the Christian world. Then followed Robertus Retinensis, Herman of Dalmatia, Plato Tiburtinus, Alfred and Daniel of Morlay, Aurelius, Eugenius Ammiratus, Philip and Mark, the Archdeacon Dominic Gondisalvi, and the converted Jew John Avendeth, known as Joannes Hispalensis. Great encouragement was given to the

* Heeren Gesch. d. Class. Lit. im Mittelalter, i. 226.

two last by Raimund, archbishop of Toledo, who made a plan to translate the philosophic writings of the Arabians into Latin, and employed them for that purpose. Then were published, accordingly, works of Avicenna, Algazelis, Alpharbius, and some others, of which the book *Fons Vitæ* was celebrated in the thirteenth century. Gerard of Cremona now published four original works and translated twenty-two others, and died in 1187. From the year 1100 to 1200 the literature of the Arabs was especially cultivated by the English *. In the eleventh century an Arabian Chronicle was translated into Latin by an Englishman who had studied on the banks of the Ebro. The same zeal drew Adelard of Bath to the Peninsula. In the twelfth century we find the names of three Englishmen capable of translating from the Arabic. In the thirteenth appear as translators Roger Bacon, Grossetête, and the renowned Michael Scot : the former, in his *Opus Majus*, shows as familiar acquaintance with Albumazar, Averroes, Avicenna, Alfarabius, Thabeti ben Corah, Hali, Alhacen, Alkinali, Alfragan, Arzachel, and other Arabic writers, as with Aristotle himself. Hugo of St. Victor, in his letter to the Bishop of Seville, Alvarus of Cordova, and also Pope Innocent III., writing to King Alfonso X., complain of the ardour for studying the Saracenic literature. This monarch, as also the Norman princes of Sicily and Italy, were now its great patrons. The former collected more than fifty learned men from Toledo, Cordova, and Paris, and set them to translate the works of Ptolemy and others. The names of these men were, Judas son of Moses, Judas named Alcohan, Moses, John Daspaso, Ferdinand of Toledo, Bernard of Burgos, the Rabbi Zag. John of Messina, John of Cremona, and Abraham. They translated these works into Spanish, from which, subsequently, Latin versions were made. Herman Alemannus, in the thirteenth century, published the *Ethics* of Aristotle from the Arabic in 1240, as Robert Grossetête of Lincoln had published them from the Greek.

The first scholastic philosopher who made great use of the Arabic learning was Alexander of Hales, who comes now before us. He was of a monastery in Gloucestershire, and surnamed doctor *irrefragabilis*; he learned

* Bulæus, *Hist. Univ. Par.* ii.

theology in Paris, and illustrated in a *summa theologiæ* the text-book of Peter Lombard, with acute syllogistic reasoning upon the opposite doctrines; in which he was opposed by William of Auvergne, bishop of Paris. He was the first to write a commentary on the Master of the Sentences; but the mystic was no less admirable than the scholastic side of his character. The historian of the Minors demands what could have induced this wondrous philosopher to enter the order of St. Francis, then in its infancy? The reply will indicate how justly he is numbered among the clean of heart; for it was in consequence of his being once exhorted to consider whether he ought not for the love of Mary to embrace poverty; and, as it was his rule never to refuse any thing asked in her name, he resolved to do so. His death was in 1245. He was buried in the church, opposite the crucifix. Over his grave was his image sculptured, and under it this inscription:—

“Gloria Doctorum, decus et flos philosophorum,
Auctor scriptorum, vir Alexander, variorum,
Norma modernorum, fons veri, lux aliorum,
Inclytus Anglorum Archilevita, sed horum
Spretor cunctorum, Fratrum collega Minorum
Factus egenorum, fit primus Doctor eorum.”

In a tablet in the wall are added these verses:—

“Quid tibi majorum repetis monumenta per orbem?
Patris Alexandri gesta, viator, habe.
Hic, placito superum prognatus gente Britanna,
Protinus a puero flexit ad astra gradum.
Non gazæ meminit, nec avorum rura licetur,
Pectore in eximio sola Minerva sedet.
Ergo freta emensus, et vastos æquoris amnes,
Se totum ad studium Parisiense tulit.
Quo vel Socraticos, vel summos quoque Platones,
Ingenio facile dexteriore præit.
Inde solum, et cœlos, et quæ super astra geruntur
Rimatus, didicit abdita fata Dei.
Sic tandem, et meritis et digna laude probatus,
Doctrinæ et verbi fit sator atque pater.
Magnus Alexander, cui mens persancta fuisset
Ac devota diu, et religiosa Deo:
Ipse ego (mox inquit) certamina litis iniquæ
Compescam, non erit cui suus obstat amor.”

It vir, et induitur palla vilente Minorum :
 Quique magister erat, fit pius ecce Minor.
 Nos quid obest (dixit) humilem gestare togellam
 Qui pariter gerimus nomen onusque patris ?
 Quid contra impediat sublimi in nomine mentem
 Cordigeros Fratres continuisse piam ?
 Discipulos Christi, quibus est lustrare popellos
 Quis ferat ignaros, jussa docere Dei ?
 Non tumet irrigua cœlesti flumine virtus :
 Nec sese extollit, cui Deus auctor adest.
 Mens humilis purgata dolo, conserva Deorum,
 Nec fama augescit, nec jacet, ima colens.
 Jam primum posthac Doctor fraterculus ibo
 Veste sub hac minimus, parta trophæa gerens.
 Dixerat, hinc patuit Francisci semper alumni
 Laurea Doctorum, qui tot, ut astra, micant.
 Tum demum ex superis captum geminare talentum,
 Ne torperet iners, providus instituit.
 At schola sacrorum quia nil satis ordine norat,
 (Cuncta quidem incertis sparsa fuere locis,)
 Hic prudens opifex multa celeberrimus arte,
 Compage et nervis consolidavit opus.
 Hæc brevibus dixi : quæ cetera multa supersunt,
 Non vacat ut noris, qui citus ire velis.
 Clauditur hoc saxo, famam sortitus abunde,
 Doctor Alexander junctus in axe Deo.
 Si quis honor meritis, si qui virtute coluntur,
 Hunc animo præfer, hunc venerare patrem.
 Ne sorde et culpa pigritieve per otia deses
 Nancisci studio, quæ Minor iste refert.

The lights which now come into view were given to the world at the same time. Amongst them we may distinguish Vincent of Beauvais, who, in an encyclopædical work, gave a general view of the state of science and philosophy, from which, perhaps, we may best learn the grounds of this great controversy between the Nominalists and Realists. The next is Michael Scot, who, while still residing at Toledo, translated the books of Aristotle de Cœlo et Mundo, de Anima, and his Natural History, after the arrangement of the Arabians, in which work he was assisted by Andreas, a Jew. After him is seen Robert Grossetête, who studied at Paris and Oxford, and died bishop of Lincoln in 1253. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle. But it is the next which follows of the saintly splendours, Albert the Great, of the

family of the Counts of Bollstädt, who brought the Aristotelian philosophy into fuller vogue. Born on the banks of the Danube, at Lauengen in Suabia, in 1193, after his first education at Passau he studied at Padua, and entered the Dominican order. His knowledge of natural philosophy was so great, that in subsequent ages impostors ascribed their magical books to him, as if he had been a magician. Though he made immense journeys, sparing no pains or cost to procure Greek books, he lived chiefly at Cologne and at Paris. He travelled always on foot, and begged by the way. Elected bishop of Regensburg in 1260, he at last renounced the episcopal dignity, and devoted himself wholly to learning, in his cloister at Cologne, where, in earlier days, he had St. Thomas for his pupil. Guilielmus de Thoco, in his life of St. Thomas, says of Albert, "that in science he surpassed every man of that age;" and Ulrich Engelbert, the pupil of Albert, says, "he was a man in every branch of knowledge so divine, that he may deservedly be called the amazement and miracle of our times*." Such was his love of poverty, that he used to leave his own writings in the monasteries in which he wrote them, that he might keep nothing of his own. On his return from the council of Lyons, he continued to hold learned conferences in his cloister, till one day his auditors perceived that his memory failed him. This was a divine warning, which he recognized; for in his early years it had been predicted to him by a vision, that he should lose all his science before his death. He therefore renounced all relation with the world, and prepared for his holy passage, which took place in the year 1280. Tennemann is of opinion that he was more a learned man and a compiler, than a deep original thinker. But what is an original thinker in morals? He wrote a commentary on most of the works of Aristotle, making great use of the Arabian authors, and mixing the new Platonic with the Aristotelian tenets. With him began the subtle division between matter and form, *essentia* or *quidditas* and *existentia*. Tennemann admits that rational psychology and natural theology are indebted to him for many just views. The former for the conception of the soul, as a *totum potestativum*; the latter for the accurate determining

* De Summo Bono, Tract. iii. c. 9.

and limitation of the knowledge of God by reason. Conscience he regarded as the first law of reason, and he distinguished the application, *συντήρησις*, and the habitual intimation, or conscientia. All theological virtues are, according to him, *virtus infusa*. He died with the reputation of great for the present, and of blessed for the future world. Contemporary with him was that celestial joyance which is next in view; and O how lustrous, love seraphic, is thy semblance in those sparkles which are from holy thoughts inspired! Now doth it know the merit of its soul-impassioned strain. This, dear companion, is John of Fidenza, or Bonaventura, from whose living streams you have so often drank. Bagnarea, in 1221, beheld his birth, and Lyons, in 1274, his glorious flight to heaven. His surname was the Seraphic Doctor. Tennemann says that he had less learning but more genius than Albert, and that his mind was more disposed to mysticism. In his Commentary on the Master of the Sentences, he placed limits to speculation, directed the philosophy of Aristotle and of the Arabians less to the defence of a vain desire of knowledge than to the determining of important questions, and the reconciliation of contending meanings, as, for instance, to the subjects of individuality and freedom: he attended more to the practical direction of men than to theoretical ideas. "The highest good," he says, "is a union with God, in whom alone man sees truth and finds happiness." Accordingly, in his "*Reductio Artium in Theologiam*," he leads all knowledge back to illumination, and distinguishes four kinds—an external, inferior, internal, and principal. In his *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* he describes the six steps of ascent to God, corresponding with as many faculties of the soul. In speculation, subservient to the highest good, he is mystical from his whole heart. "If it be asked," says the Chancellor of Paris, "who amongst other doctors should be preferred, I answer without prejudice, Lord Bonaventura, of whom one may say truly, that, like another John, he was a burning and shining light. Amongst all Catholic doctors no one seems more fit to illuminate the intelligence and to inflame the heart." The most eminent admirers of his writings were Henry of Ghent, John Trithemius, St. Antoninus of Florence, and Sixtus of Sienna. The next is the great spirit of Aquinum, not so called from having

been born at Aquinum, a Samnian not a Campanian city, but from the name of his family; for the Aquinas are in many places in Campania, and the saint was born at Belicastro *. He was induced, in opposition to the will of his family, through his thirst after an angelic life and wisdom, to enter the Dominican order in 1243. He studied under Albert at Cologne and Paris, and received the title of the Universal and Angelic Doctor. His history, composed by Tournon, is one of the most delightful books that the hand of man ever traced. Tennemann, and indeed all competent judges, admit that he possessed a truly philosophic genius—vast, almost incredible, knowledge and learning—with a most fervent zeal for the promotion of both. He was a Realist, while he certainly admitted that the general did not of itself exist in the reality, further than the possibility; but he held the object of the understanding, or the abstract form of the thing, for the original existence of the thing; and he sought, by a development of the Aristotelian theory of thought, interwoven also with the ideology of Plato and the Alexandrians, to give a better holding to this system. He develops the idea of matter and form, as constituent parts of substance and of the principle of individuality. The reasonable soul, whose powers and peculiarities he regarded after the manner of Aristotle, is to him the substantial form of man, immaterial and immortal. The highest object of his application is theology, to which he imparts a philosophic form in his Commentary on the Master of the Sentences, in his work against the heathens (*Summa Catholicæ fidei adversus Gentiles*), and in his *Summa Theologiæ*. According to the opinion of Tennemann, he supposed that evil or the absence of good was necessary to the perfection of the whole. He carefully taught, however, that God was only incidentally its author †.

This wondrous work of St. Thomas was the ground of Leibnitz's Theodicee. Ethics are divided by him into general and particular, and are treated of partly in a theological manner, and partly after that of Aristotle. "They are indebted to him," says Tennemann, "not a

* Gabriel Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriæ, lib. ii. Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Sum. P. i. Qu. 49.

little : he maintains an alternate operation between the reason and the will, which is necessarily determined by the highest good, happiness, though it has freedom in the choice of the means leading to it. Such was his intellectual ministry, which left so mighty and imperishable a trace, though but for a short date below the world possessed him. Numerous are the lights whom we may see grouped round his saintly radiance, yielded chiefly by the Dominican and Jesuit orders. Amongst these are Giles of Colonna, the Roman, and Thomas de vio Cajetanus, Gabriel Velasquez, Petrus de Mendoza, Petrus Fonseca, Dominic of Flanders, and Francis Suarez : his contemporary, Petrus Hispanus, who became Pope John XXI. was distinguished for his *Compendium of Scholastic Logic, Summulas Logicales*. Henry Goethals, otherwise called Henry of Ghent, Archdeacon of Tournay, was also a man of deep penetrating understanding ; he was a realist, and united with the Aristotelian form Plato's ideas, which he held to be a kind of independent existences : he had however many peculiar views in Psychology, and he often contradicts St. Thomas. Richardus de Media Villa, surnamed Doctor solidus, fundatissimus, copiosus, a Professor at Oxford, where he died in 1300, was also an acute commentator on the Lombard.

Duns Scot, the next of these resplendent forms, was born, some say in Tathmon, near Wexford, others in Dun, in the north of Ireland, at the extremity of the Isthmus of Lecalia, an ancient city, the see of St. Patrick and of St. Columban. Wadding infers that he was from Ireland, from his saying "*Sicut in definitione Sancti Francisci vel Sancti Patricii,*" names which would first occur to him through affection for his order and his native land. The people of Duns, where was a convent of Minors till destroyed by the English, have always believed that he was their townsman ; and Wadding rejects the testimony of the manuscript in Merton College, Oxford, which states that he was of Northumberland ; for the inscription on his tomb on every one's tongue, contradicts it :

Scotia me genuit, Anglia me suscepit,
Gallia me docuit, Colonia me tenet.

Accordingly the Irish were always his benefactors. It was Maurice, Archbishop of Tuam, long time professor

at Padua, who published his works : it was Hugo Cavellus, Archbishop of Armagh, who corrected them and separated the genuine from the spurious. Scot was born in 1274, the same year in which Bonaventura died, the admirable Providence of God ordaining that as one sun set another should rise upon the earth. When a boy, he was deemed heavy and stupid, but on going to Oxford, where he was taught grammar by two Minor friars, he soon distinguished himself, and became a master in all sciences—logic, physics, metaphysics, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, optics, civil law, canon law, and was saluted as Prince of Theologians. He wrote many volumes of Commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures, but his chief work, which he wrote at Oxford, is his profound Commentary on the four books of the Master of the Sentences. Called to Paris, he was placed in the chair of theology, when there were 30,000 scholars : he excelled first, in announcing accurate and universal propositions, to which as to principles he referred, and by which he solved all the most subtle theorems ; secondly, in unfolding the reasons or essences, or as the Scotists say, “the quiddities and formal reasons of things ; for since accidents depend on essences, he saw the importance of knowing them chiefly ;” thirdly, he excelled in a natural force of subtle genius ; he was remarkable also for not following any one master, but for approving and blaming all alike according to his judgment ; yet, though he spared no one, he spoke so modestly and religiously, that no injurious word ever passed his lips or pen. Finally, as a philosopher, he is so Catholic that there never was a suspicion respecting a single line of all his writings ; what he wrote or is said to have written at Paris, was, however, much inferior to the fruit of his labours at Oxford. By the guardian, Gondisalvus, in his letter to William Guardian, of Paris, Scot, who was still young, is termed a father of laudable life, excellent science, subtle genius, and of great renown ; he defended the doctrine of the immaculate conception at Paris with such force that all conferred upon him the title of Doctor Subtilis, which is attested by these ancient rude verses on his tomb :

Concepta est virgo primi sine labe parentis :
 Inde genus meriti tantum sibi Papa refundens,
 Doctor subtilis, dicitur.

In which lines Wadding understands by "Pope," only the Bishop of Paris, all Bishops being then so styled. He defended that doctrine also in such a spirit of moderation that the passage might be selected as a most admirable specimen of the calm wisdom of the blessed clean of heart ; gentle and not less powerful, clear and yet of unfathomable depth. Thus remarkable was the origin of the title conferred upon him.

In 1308, Scot, after reading at Paris before numerous disciples, received sudden orders to depart to Cologne. The circumstances of his departure gave rise to the sublime. He was taking recreation with his disciples without the city, in the Prato Clericorum, when the letters of his superiors were brought to him ; he read them and then announced to those around, that he was going to set out immediately without returning to the convent, and being asked by the astonished and admiring disciples, why he did not return there first to take up his manuscripts and bid adieu to the brethren ? he replied, "the father general orders me to set out for Cologne, but I do not read that he orders me to return home first, to take up my manuscripts, and salute the brethren. So he embraced them, and from the clerk's meadow began his journey to Cologne, where in a few months he was to close his short but glorious course. Men have wondered what could have been the motive of sending him from the first academy of the world to a city where there was not even then a university ; for these things occurred during the reign of the Emperor Albert : some suppose that it was to found that university, and to complete what Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas had begun there for letters ; others think that it was to oppose the heresy of the Begards, which was then raging ; others, that he was to conclude there as he had done at Paris, the controversy respecting the immaculate conception. Be that as it may, on his approach, the chief men of Cologne, with the clergy and people, went out to meet him, and conducted him with solemn pomp, as if he had been a mighty monarch, to the convent of his order. This beautiful triumph was like a beginning of the angelic escort, that was to conduct his soul to Paradise, for the minister of death had then received commission to release it. Here he engaged in prodigious labours, preaching and disputing, and reading lectures, instruct-

ing the minds of men and correcting their manners, during the brief space which intervened before the arrival of the octave day of All Saints, when he was called to the society of all the saints, and obtained eternal rest in God. He was buried at the entrance of the sacristy, in the convent of the Minors, but the body was afterwards removed into the choir. It is wonderful what diverse and strange accounts have been given of his death. Some say that he was struck with apoplexy, and that he was buried alive through too much haste in placing him in the tomb; but Wadding refutes this assertion, by the mere fact, of the solemn religious rite always observed in the convent of Cologne, as elsewhere, which requires that the body should not be interred till the following day, at high mass; besides, there were then many wise physicians and disciples who loved him, who would have first tried every experiment; Bzovius adds, from Paul Jovius, that Scot, on coming to himself, ascended the steps of the sepulchre, beat against the door, devoured his own hand, and dashed his head against the wall; and that his miserable groans had been heard within, though no one came to his assistance; but Minor friars were always placed in the earth, where they can neither groan nor eat their hands; and, moreover, their hands and feet are always bound; besides, if he had been buried so quickly, there could not have been time to build a sepulchre so great as to have steps descending into it, nor could it have been already built, for the friars could not seize upon the tomb of any great noble to place in it one of their order. The same calumnies were repeated of Boniface VIII.; but when, in 1506, his sepulchre was broken open, the body was found perfect, with a sapphire ring, which Cardinal Cajetan redeemed with 100 pieces of gold, on the finger of the hand which he was reported to have eaten. Other accounts respecting Scot, maliciously propagated by venal pens, do not deserve refutation, as they were not heard of till two centuries after his death. The Jovian words are, "*Hoc anno volens, nolens, ex humanis abiit Joannes Dunsius.*"

Wadding hints at facts which may have led to such rumours. The holy man Gero, Archbishop of Cologne, to whose election the pope assented by an angelic monition, remaining in an ecstasy, was buried alive by

Walamus, the deacon, who desired the Episcopacy, which he obtained, but afterwards being penitent, he went to Rome, and was absolved, on condition of building a new monastery, or repairing an old one; and he repaired accordingly that of St. Martin at Cologne, and endowed it with great revenues for monks from Ireland; so the people hearing that the monastery of the Scotists was built on account of a man buried alive, it was rumoured that these foreigners obtained that noble residence at Cologne, on account of the wrong done to one of their nation, who was buried alive; and from a Scot to John Scot the transition was easy. Others say, from a supposed sermon of St. Bernardine of Sienna, that while he was enjoying God in an ecstasy, he passed to the Father, and so was buried ignorantly by the brethren. The passage is as follows—"We should elevate the mind from these sensual to insensible things, as it happened to the subtle Master Scot, who was so elevated in spirit, that the brethren, who knew not his manner, thinking him dead; put him under ground alive; and afterwards his disciples coming and making enquiries, found that it was so, and that he had been suffocated in the earth;" but this sermon is not of St. Bernardine. Still, however sudden, his death was precious and blessed.

*Mors justis subita, quem præcepit bona vita,
Non minuit merita, si moriatur ita.*

But, in fact, no ancient author mentions that Scot perished by violence or by apoplexy, or that he was buried alive; the verses on his tomb only imply that he disputed as usual on the very morning of his death, but that it was natural and without horror. His disciple Antonio Andrea declares, that his memory is in benediction, which sufficiently refutes such rumours. The first epitaph placed on his tomb in leonine verses, inspires reverence notwithstanding its rudeness.

*Clauditur hic rivus, fons Ecclesiæ, via, vivus,
Doctor justitiæ, studii flos, arca sophiæ.
Ingenio scandens, scripturæ abdita pandens
In teneris annis fuit, ergo memento Joannis,
Hunc Duns cornatum, fac cælitus esse beatum,
Pro patre translato, modulemur pectore grato,
Dux fuit hic cleri, claustrum lux, et tuba veri.*

This inscription could long be read in the library of Cologne. There were added four lines to it when the bones were translated into the choir,

Hic lector Scotus subtilis sit bene notus,
 Doctor humi stratus, hac subque nola tumulatus;
 Pro qua orate, Christi veniam flagitate,
 Dicentesque pie, tu summe Deus miserere.

In 1509 the sepulchre was more beautifully sculptured, and a more polished epitaph inscribed on brass.

Ante oculos saxum Doctorem deprimit ingens,
 Cujus ad interitum sacra Minerva gemit,
 Siste gradum lector, fulvo dabis oscula saxo:
 Corpus Joannis hæc tenet urna Scoti.
 Anno milleno ter c. c. c. cumque adderet octo,
 Postremum clausit letho agitante diem.

Placed upon two tablets were also these inscriptions,

Parisius plora, mœstis incede lacernis,
 Hic perit in toto, quod volat orbe, decus.
 O Sorbona, tuas humiles compone cathedras,
 Cultus ab ingeniis fons sacer artis abest,
 Straminis in vico placidi certaminis ordo,
 Cespitat, heu belli desinit esse caput.
 Pondere supremi validos componite luctus
 Doctiloqui, pulset tristia corda pavor.
 Hunc, posito vultu læto, deflete togati,
 Discipulis labor hic omnibus unus erit."

What follows are upon the second tablet:—

" Doctor subtilis solvens sua lustra Joannes
 Scotus in objectis ultima verba dedit.
 Huic humilis casto Francisci cordula renes
 Strinxit, erat sapiens, presbyter officio.
 Fervebat studio, nulli virtute secundus,
 Quod didicit totum, mox alios docuit.
 Concepta est virgo primi sine labe parentis:
 Hic tulit: hic heresi prælia dira dedit.
 Inde genus meriti tantum sibi Papa refundens
 Doctor subtilis dicitur, inde dedit
 Quatuor in scriptis, quæ sunt divina probavit;
 Hinc reliquis vates lumine plus vigit.
 Quin et sancta mihi, quæ digna problemata liquit:
 Ingeniis nostris fertiliora valent.

Artibus egit opem tuto, nunc ille modernos
 Prosequitur pandens, quæ via sit veterum.
 Tempora post Christi, propria dulcedine lethum
 Venit atrox raptim carcere composito.
 Dogmata qui quondam retulit non infimus orbi,
 Exiguus cunctis nunc silet exanimis.
 Qui ratione stetit, non victus, semper Achilles
 Cæno sordidior vincitur ille fimo.
 Horrida jam sacros trahitur sub lite voranda,
 Hunc subeant vermes, proh nova præda venit.
 Ante gradus medios, nola nunc ubi pendet ab alto,
 Hic chorus in terris ossa tenet tumulo.
 Turba futura canet bona, quæ congeßit in unum,
 Singula quæ docuit, scripta relicta manent.
 Flebile qui busti præsens epigramma tueris
 Hanc animam societ, posce Deum superis."

The sepulchre of Scot had an elevation of three geometric palms; it was covered with plates of brass, in the midst of which was sculptured the image of Scot, holding a book, and having at his feet two lions; on his right hand were sculptured Guillelmus Ocham, Hugo de Novo Castro, Franciscus de Mayronis, Ricardus de Media Villa, Alexander de Hales, and on his left Nicolaus de Lyra, Petrus Aureolus, and Rogerus Varro: at the upper end, at the head of Scot, were three pontiffs, of the family of the Minors, Alexander V., Nicolaus IV., and Sixtus IV.: at the corners were two cardinals, St. Bonaventura, and Bertrand, with their insignia. Wadding says, "such care of the fathers towards the dry bones of this doctor, and such vast riches expended on his sepulchre, I attribute not so much to his doctrine as to his piety." "Truly he was a holy man," as the old poet says, "who, under a mean habit had an angel's heart," all his life was mystical and glorious. What a spirit of renouncement did he evince in that heroic departure from Paris, leaving a great city, a celebrated academy, a grand convent, friends, disciples, writings, dear offspring of his genius, chairs and honours. With a true philosophic mind, he praised or blamed, indifferently, domestic or foreign writers; and such was his modesty and submission of his own judgment, that rarely he names the great authors whom he condemns. For St. Thomas he always evinced the greatest reverence,

and he sought to make him agree always with Bonaventura. At Paris, Coimbra, Salamanca, Complutensia, Padua, Pavia, and at Rome, there were chairs expressly set apart for lectures on Scot, from which great advantage resulted: for such discussions were profitable. *Ferrum ferro exacuitur, et homo exacuit faciem amici sui.*—On this ground the historian of the Minors concludes, that the controversies between the Thomists and Scotists were beneficial to the general interests of philosophy. With a sincere and candid soul, this great scholastic examined truth, and, with a tranquil mind and a heart full of peace, treated on the mysteries of faith.

“You have, with the Prophet Isaiah,” says St. Augustin, “the words, ‘*Venite disputemus, dicit Dominus,*’ and in many other places of the divine Scriptures. Read these passages, and refer to the Greek codexes, in the same testimonies of the holy Scriptures, and investigate the origin of the term *Dialectica*, lest you should not imitate, with a wise piety, what all the just have done with God, to whom it has been said, ‘*Venite disputemus, dicit Dominus,*’ but on the contrary should condemn it with insulting temerity *.”

The obscurity of Scot arose from the profound nature of his subject, and therefore Trithemius says, “The most learned Scot was so profound, that his writings are penetrable only to a few.” Tennemann says, that though Scot, as an opponent of St. Thomas, was often led into vain and trifling distinctions, yet he joined also with that subtilty a striving after a deeper foundation of truth; for which end he sought a ground for the certainty of knowledge, rational as well as empirical, and directed his abilities to show the necessity and truth of the divine revelation. As a realist he dissented from St. Thomas, in maintaining that the general, not only in possibility but in reality, was grounded in the object; that it was not created by reason, but that it had an actual existence. In psychology he denied the real diversity of the soul’s faculties, and maintained its unlimited freedom. In theology he sought to render more strict the cosmological proof of the existence of God,

* Lib. I. Cont. Crescen. cap. 14.

and to demonstrate the divine attributes; but he showed the impossibility of a theology which should be the result of reason alone. The Scotists, his followers, were in opposition to the Thomists, who adhered to the opinion of the Angelic doctor.

The latter now pass before us. Giles of Colonna, the Roman, one of their most distinguished lights, was surnamed Doctor Fundatissimus, and Theologorum Princeps. He was born in 1247, and he died in 1316. He was a consistent realist, who held that truth existed as well in the understanding as in the object. The high service which he conferred, consisted in a clearer development of metaphysical problems and difficulties, and in attempts to reconcile the contending opinions with regard to existence, form, matter, and individuality. Near him we may remark Hervay Noel, or Hervæus Natalis, a monk from Brittany, Rector of the university of Paris, who died at Narbonne in 1323. His dialectics were profound but more obscure than those of his predecessor.

The Scotists form the saintly throng which moves on the other side, amongst whom no one was more celebrated than the Minor Friar, Franciscus de Mayronis, surnamed Doctor Illuminatus et Acutus, and also named Magister Abstractionum, the author of the Sorbonic Disputations—Actus Sorbonici, and celebrated in that age for his commentaries on Aristotle, St. Augustin, St. Anselm, the Lombard, and other philosophical works: he died at Piacenza, in 1325. Amongst the others we may distinguish, Hieronemus de Ferrariis, Alvarus Pelagius of Galicia, Antonio Andrea from Arragon, surnamed Doctor Dulcifluus, Walter Burleigh, Petrus Tartaretus the Franciscan, John Baptist Montorius, Joannes Canonicus, Landolphus Caracciolus, Joannes de Janduno, Hugo de Novo Castro, an Englishman, and Petrus Aureolus, who were all eminent among the strict disciples of the Scotist school. Other illustrious men belonged to it, but without evincing an exclusive attachment. Amongst these was Joannes Bassolius, of whom Scot used to say that he alone was always sufficient audience; for, on one occasion, finding but few persons assembled, he deferred commencing, until happening to perceive that Bassolius was amongst them, he

began to lecture with alacrity, saying “*Bassolius adest? en auditorium est!*”

Amidst the million lights, however, of this period, there stand yet two unnoticed, as wondrous perhaps, in their respective form, as any that have ever, from our earth, returned to the skies. These are Roger Bacon and Raymund Lullus. The former, who was born at Ilchester in 1214, was styled, in reference to his prodigious knowledge of mathematical, physical, and chemical science, as also for his knowledge of languages, Doctor Mirabilis. We have already had occasion to make mention of his works, in our view of the learning of the ages of faith. He was a master of poetry, rhetoric, all polite learning, all liberal arts, all mathematical science, medicine, all philosophy, all theology and jurisprudence, Greek and Hebrew letters, all history and monuments of antiquity. He sent his disciple, brother John, of London, to Pope Clement IV., with books and mathematical instruments, constructed by himself, to be presented to his holiness*.

The second of these saintly splendours yielded a different light. It was in the year 1275 that Raymund Lullus, surnamed Doctor Illuminatus, was converted from the vain conversation of the world, to purity of heart, and the love of wisdom. He was born in Majorca, in the village of St. Michael. In youth his mind was averse from all kinds of science, and addicted to a palatine life. His parents, complying with his inclinations, sent him to the court of King James of Arragon, where, as seneschal he lived abandoned to every kind of luxury, and consumed his days in vain amusements: he loved greatly to compose metrical songs, for which he became celebrated. Amongst those whom he selected for his reckless love, was a certain beautiful lady, whom by no arts he could ensnare. One day, being on horseback and passing through the public place, he observed her going into a church, when, blinded through his amorous fury, all mounted as he was, he followed her into the temple, from which he was driven out by the people amidst general execration. The lady, grieved that a man of such honourable rank and dignity in the state, should become, on her account, a bye-word with

* Wad. An. Minor. tom. iv. 1266.

the people, began to consider by what way she could wean him from that guilty passion: for this purpose she arranged with him a private interview, and then laying bare her bosom, disclosed to him a horrible cancer which preyed upon it. "Behold, O Raymund," she said, "what it is you love! Ah, turn to Christ that affection which you have hitherto cherished for me, and so deserve to receive from him a celestial crown!" Never was grace divine more rapid, in its transformation of a heart, than now. The unhappy man was struck dumb, and, on returning to himself, he fell upon his knees, and resolved to dedicate himself, ever after, to the Lord of each created being. Then, to sustain his first steps, was he vouchsafed visions celestial of Christ upon the cross, and voices were heard issuing from it, saying, "Raymund, follow me." Forthwith, renouncing the pomps of his office, and abandoning home, riches, and friends, he sold all his possessions and, after making provision for his family, gave the rest to the poor.

His first desire was to preach to the Saracens, and for this especial end he sought help and light from God. The gift of wisdom was then conferred upon him, so that he, who had before been wholly illiterate, became imbued with every kind of learning. His heavenly life began by visiting different holy places of devotion, as St. James of Compostello, that he might commend his enterprize to holy patrons. It was his wish to proceed to Paris, but St. Raymund, of Pennafort, dissuaded him from it. Returning to his country he applied to grammar, but at Lisbon, in his fortieth year, he first acquired a knowledge of Latin under Thomas his preceptor. He then began to compose a great work in that language, which he transmitted to posterity. In order to convert the Mahometans he learned Arabic. It was on a certain mountain, not far from his house, where he remained during seven days alone, in prayer and contemplation, that he is said to have received extraordinary light from heaven; then constructing a little cell there he remained many months, day and night absorbed in meditation and prayer to God. Wild legends added, that the leaves of the tree, under which he rested, were imprinted with Greek, Arabic, Chaldaic, and Latin characters.

He now persuaded King James to found a college or convent in the island of Daya or Miramar, for thirteen

Minor friars, who were to study the Arabic, for the express purpose of being sent to preach to the Mahometans, to labour for whose conversion all his mind was thenceforth bent. For this purpose he came to Rome, to arrange with Pope Nicolaus IV. about founding other monasteries and colleges for the oriental tongues. At length he resolved to pass into Africa; yet, when all was ready, and the ship about to depart, he became discouraged and remained at the port of Genoa; but when he saw the ship depart without him, he so bitterly condemned his own weakness and pusillanimity that he fell sick, and became profoundly penitent, grieving secretly with such interior affliction, that he was soon reduced to a shadow. On the eve of Pentecost he caused himself to be carried into the house of the Dominicans, when, hearing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, he prayed that his sins might be forgiven him. Then returning home, oppressed in mind and body, he sought the habit of St. Francis but could not obtain it, though he sought it with tears: then with knees upon the earth he received the Eucharist, after kissing the feet of the priest who brought it. Thus did he prepare as a Christian for his death. Hearing, however, that there was then a trireme in the port, bound for Tunis, even in that weak condition, he caused himself and his books to be placed on board. In vain did his friends and many pious men seek to detain him, thinking that he was at the point of death. He persisted in his resolution to embark, and the ship weighed anchor immediately; and no sooner was the vessel under sail than the clouds began to pass from his heart and his disease to diminish, so that, in a few days, he was wholly restored to health, and arrived at that city in great joy. Here he had frequent disputations with the most learned of the Saracens, and instilled into many a more humane conception of the Evangelic law, some of whom he hoped to bring wholly to embrace it. But the king took alarm, and cast him into prison, called his seniors and deliberated about putting him to death, but they were moved to withhold that sentence by the gravity of the man, his eloquence, and his reverent looks. However he was driven out of the city, and threatened with instant death if he returned, and while led to the ship he was struck and wounded with stones, and insulted with opprobrious epithets. Before the ship

sailed, a Christian was mistaken for him, and on the point of being stoned, so he resolved to depart, though full of grief for having left imperfect the conversion of many.

He sailed thence to Naples, where he remained till the election of Celestine V. Here, in 1311, he wrote a book of disputations with a clerk, in which he speaks of himself as follows,—“I was a man joined in marriage, I had children, I was competently rich, licentious and worldly. I willingly gave up all things for the honour of God, and the public good, and that I might exalt the holy faith, I learned Arabic. Many times I went to preach to the Saracens for the faith—being taken, I was imprisoned and scourged; and during forty-five years I have laboured, that I might move the rulers of the church and Christian princes to provide for the public good. Now I am an old man, poor, and I am in the same mind, and intend to remain in it till death, if our Lord shall grant it to me.”

In 1295 he went to Rome, and thence, by Genoa, to the King of Majorca, with whom he had a long discourse on converting the nations. Thence he went to Paris. Whence, returning to his country, he disputed daily on the mysteries of the faith with Jews and Saracens. Thence he went to Cyprus, to preach to the schismatics, Jacobites, and Nestorians, when he narrowly escaped death by poison administered to him. Thence he returned to Paris, where he remained till the election of Clement V. In 1312 he came to the council of Vienne, to propose his views for the good of Christendom.

Success so far attended his exertions, that he lived to see founded colleges for the study of the Oriental languages, in the pontifical court, at Bologna, Paris, Salamanca, and Oxford, supported by the pontiffs and prelates of those nations, excepting that of Paris, which the king of France, through his singular affection for Raymund, wished to found and endow at his own expense. After leaving Vienne, he visited the courts of France and Spain, to exhort them to repress the Turkish power. Then he passed into Mauritania, having endured opprobrium and insults in many places, till he came at length to the city of Bona, which had been the see of St. Augustin, where he led to the light of faith seventy philosophers, followers of Averroes. Thence passing to

Algerbius, he there also converted many, but, in consequence, he was cast into prison and left without food for fourteen days, with a bridle placed within his jaws. On being led out of prison he was publicly scourged through the streets of the city, and banished from the kingdom, and forbidden to return under pain of death. Nevertheless he preached again at Tunis, and at Bugia, where he was again imprisoned. He engaged in a long dispute on the Trinity, Incarnation, and on the Sacraments, with Homer a Saracen. Being liberated and sentenced to perpetual banishment, he embarked in a Genoese vessel, which, after a long and difficult course against violent winds, reached the port of Pisa and there was miserably wrecked in the sight of a multitude: Raymond escaped by swimming, and repaired to the Dominican convent, where he was hospitably received and lodged for a considerable time. From this accident he contracted a sickness which confined him many days, and on his recovery he received the rules and habit of the third order of St. Francis.

A second time he went to Pope Clement, to persuade him to procure a general movement for recovering the holy land. He now drew up a short history of his life and conversion, by desire of King James of Majorca. It is thought by some, though without proof, that during this interval he went to England, there exercised the chemical art, produced gold money, and composed those books on alchemy which pass under his name, but it is certain that those books were not written by him. Returning home, with the intention of paying a last visit to his family, he wrote his book *De Fine*, in which he shows what was the object of all his labours. But now he burned with an ardent desire to close his life by martyrdom. The lively pressure of this zeal appears in all his works, and especially in his book on Contemplation, in which he says, "Men, O Lord, who die through age, perish through the deficiency of natural heat and the abundance of cold; and therefore thy servant and subject is unwilling, unless it be thy pleasure, to die such a death, for he wishes to finish his life through the ardour of love and charity, as in love thou didst deliver thy soul for us! Patient and commiserating Lord, oftentimes have I trembled with fear and cold! Ah, when will the day and hour arrive in which my body, through the

great heat of love, and the ardent desire and joy of dying for its Creator and Saviour, shall tremble? Thy servant and subject, O Lord, is now preparing himself for a journey, and for pouring out his blood for thee; therefore, before he comes to death, may it please thee to unite thyself with him in such manner that he may never be separated from thee in contemplation and love. O Lord God, most pious, when will the day come in which thy servant shall be bound hand and foot, that his body may be tortured to death for the love of thee his Lord and Saviour! Although I am unworthy, O Lord, to die for thee, nevertheless I will not give up all hope of obtaining this holy and precious death; for as thou, O Lord, didst grant life to thy unworthy servant which he never merited, so likewise, if it pleaseth thee, thou wilt grant to him a glorious death, although he be utterly unworthy of it; and if perchance, O Lord, thou shouldst refuse to me the death of martyrdom, at least I beseech thee grant me the grace of dying, weeping and desiring to die for the love of thee, O Lord, my Creator, and my Saviour—*Saltem rogo concedas mihi gratiam moriendi lachrymando, flendo, et desiderando mori pro amore tui, Domine, Creatoris, ac Salvatoris mei!*”

With these dispositions, at the age of seventy-nine, in the year 1314, and on the fourteenth of August, he, for the last time, passed to Africa, from the port of Majorca, the chief men of the city accompanying him to the cliffs, whose names are still preserved in the archives of that city. Arriving at Tunis, he encouraged and confirmed the disciples and those who had been already converted to Christ. Thence proceeding to Bugia, in secret conversations and discourses, he instructed some in the Christian faith; at length, disdaining his own indolence and timidity, he came forth in public and preached Christ openly, conjuring the Mahometans by the omnipotent God, who will appear to all men in the tremendous judgment, to fly the errors of that doctrine, and to walk in the light while it is yet day. Full of indignation, the Saracens rushed upon him, and after inflicting stripes cast him into prison; there, in various torments and left to famish with hunger, he ceased not, though in chains, to write and preach, till the magistrates decreed that he should be dragged out of the city and stoned. The satellites cruelly committed him to the infuriated multitude,

who exercised on him all manner of barbarity with stones and swords. On his head, which, in 1611, was taken out of the mausoleum, in presence of the magistrates and superiors of the Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, and other orders, there were observed four great wounds, two by a sword, and two by stones. No part of his body was left sound, and he lay buried under a vast pile. Two merchants of Genoa, Stephen Colon and Lewis de Pastorga, begged that his body might be given to them. On bringing it to the ship they discovered that the spark of life was not quite extinguished—they put to sea, but after two days, and when in sight of his native island, Raymund expired, on the feast of the holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. Casting anchor in the port of Majorca, they concealed at first the treasure which was on board, intending to take it to Genoa, but scruples of conscience prevented them and they divulged it to the magistrates, who came, with the clergy and all the people, and placed the body in the church of St. Eulalia, intending to bear it to the paternal sepulchre at St. Mark's, but the Minor friars, on the ground of his belonging to the third order, succeeded in having him carried to their church, where they buried him near the tomb of a prince of Portugal, who had died on returning from the sepulchre of Christ. After some years, the convent having been burnt, the body was translated to the chapel of St. Mary with great solemnity.

Such then was the wandering, unstable, and inconstant life of Raymund Lully. Twice he visited both Armenias, Syria, and Palestine; once he visited Cyprus, and, as some suppose, all Egypt, Bohemia, and England; thrice he went to Mauritania and Paris, six times to Rome, frequently he traversed every part of Spain, Sicily, and Calabria; and what seems incredible, amidst such prodigious labours of travelling, he could compose many books, for he wrote wherewithal to form twenty volumes. He, who is not moved by the ardour of his faith, and desire of martyrdom, and perseverance in labouring for the religion of Jesus Christ, must, as Wadding observes, “assuredly have an unfeeling heart.” The church however hath not pronounced a judgment respecting him.

The historian of the Minors defends his writings against the accusations of Eymericus and others, admitting that three of his propositions are hard; but as his

style is obscure and his thoughts profound, recommending great caution and indulgence. All men do not receive those great secrets and recondite significations, which in the books of Raymund Lully may be contemplated with better and more favourable eyes. Whatever may be thought respecting the belief that his doctrine, either in whole or in part, was immediately by God infused into his mind, there can be no doubt, but that in a wondrous and divine manner, was the intelligence of a rude illiterate man illuminated. He himself never said that all his knowledge was infused, but only a general art of meditation, and he always said humbly that if any errors crept into his writings, he offered them to the correction of the Holy Church, his mother. Falsely are ascribed to him the books, heretical and diabolic—*De Invocatione Dæmonum*, *De Secretis Naturæ*, *De Alchemia et Metallorum Metamorphosi*, which are by another Raymund, surnamed Neophitus, a Hebrew rabbin, converted, as it was thought, to the faith, and afterwards member of some order.

No one, more than Lully, ever inveighed with greater severity against the false rich and true poor, nor exposed with more energy, the fallacy of that art, in his book *De Questionibus solubilibus per Artem inventivam*. He shewed that alchemy was not a real but a chimerical science; in his book *De Mirabilibus*, he proves it to be impossible, by alchemy, to transmute one metal into another; in his book *De Arbore Scientiæ*, he ridiculed the alchemists, as also in his work *De Principiis Medicinæ*. The *Testamentum Novissimum* is not composed by him. In his theological work on the books of the Sentences, in a copious and unusual manner of speaking, he comprehends all the secrets of the faith, and institutes many questions on each of the controversies of theology. Among his works, one book is entitled "*Dominus quæ pars*," which is a disputation between Raymund and Dun Scot, of which the origin was curious. Raymund and his disciples being present at a disputation of Scot, and expressing by signs their dissent, Scot, surprised at such conduct from men who had a rude exterior, in order to try whether their chief knew grammar, asked him, "*Dominus quæ pars*?"—meaning of the discourse; and Raymund answered immediately, "*Dominus non est pars sed totum*," and then made a discourse on the

divine mysteries, which was still more profound than that of the subtle doctor. His books on contemplation breathe a fervent piety: besides these, a variety of small treatises indicate a man of subtle genius, apt for every science and art. In his defence Wadding remarks that the great and little arts of truth have admirable windings, by which no one can enter, though with the thread of an Ariadne, without often failing in judgment.

His style, however, is rude, and even barbarous, and his sentences are often expressed in such a manner as to excite cavils at his doctrine. Yet, if he did contract errors, one who died for the faith with such admirable zeal and simplicity, and who submitted all his writings humbly to the correction of the Roman Church, is never to be styled a heretic. As St. Jerome says, "Heretics, not alone make for themselves idols of errors, but also adore, from their hearts, what they have made." Without pertinacity therefore, as Wadding observes, no one is ever proclaimed a heretic; and this was expressly declared by Honorius III. in the cause of the Abbot Joachim, when he wrote to certain prelates charging them to punish those who should thenceforth call Joachim a heretic, on account of his book against Peter Lombard, having been condemned by the general council of Lateran*.

According to Tennemann, the great art which Raymund was supposed to have received in a vision whence he received the title of Doctor Illuminatissimus, was nothing else but a logical, mathematical method of combining ideas in classes, and therewith to solve all scientific problems, a universal art of discovery founded upon topics. In this he had united some ideas from the philosophy of the Arabians and from the Cabbala, of which last he seems to have been the first among the Christians who had any knowledge. Not to speak of his *Ars Magna*, which, in subsequent times, found admirers in some strong understandings, the clear views of morality, which are conveyed in his numerous writings, have extorted the admiration of modern philosophers, who, like Tenneman, have had the courage to consult them. The speculators who pretended to be his disciples, styling themselves Lullists, transplanted his religious enthusiasm and faith into the art of making gold, though not without evincing

* Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. v, vi.

many remarkable and clear views. With some of these men we shall meet in another place, and in very different company from the present; the dark figure of Peter of Apono would ill accord with these holy splendours; but of his chief assistant, Arnold of Villeneuve, who was a disciple of Lullus, I may even here briefly speak; for Arnold was never condemned by the Holy See: on the contrary, the following letter from Vienna of Pope Clement, may be read in the Vatican. "While Master Arnold de Villanova, clerk of Valentia, our physician, was living, after we had been raised to the summit of apostolical dignity, he used often to say to us that he had compiled a very useful book on the Practice of Medicine, which he frequently promised to give us; therefore, since the said Master Arnold has been prevented by death from fulfilling his promise to us, we charge your fraternity, and all subject to you, by Apostolic writings, as also all abbots, priors, and deans, to announce, that whoever shall have, or shall know who hath that said book, must take care to reveal and transmit it to us under pain of excommunication *." But to the costlier splendours we must return. Such then was the third family of the Almighty Sire, who, of his spirit made them largely drink, and held them always ravished with his view. The fourth period from the fourteenth till the end of the fifteenth century, involves the renewed combat between the nominalists and realists, which terminated apparently in the victory of the former. The lights that now move towards us were then conspicuous: of these the first is William Durandus de St. Porciano, called Doctor Resolutissimus, and Bishop of Meaux, in the beginning of the fourteenth century. He was a thinker, who, perceiving the groundlessness of a dialectic play with ideas, sought to solve many difficulties by a clearer and more defined division, and by a more strict separation of the subjective and objective in knowledge, to prepare the way for other antagonists of realism. From being at first a Thomist, he became the stoutest adversary of that school. He who follows more as a shadow than a light contributing to the general effulgence, is William of Ocham, of the county of Surrey, called by some Doctor Singularis et Venerabilis

* Wadding, Annal, Min. tom. VI.

Inceptor. This famous adversary of John the Twenty-second, who studied at Paris, was a Scotist and a Franciscan. Tenneman says, "that through his philosophic penetration and zeal in combating despotism, he made an epoch in philosophy and history; but as he advocated the cause of the king of France and of the Emperor against the Pope, we may easily understand what means this pretended hostility to despotism. *Entia non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem*, was his maxim. He abandoned realism for the opposite system, which he defended with great zeal, endeavouring to shew that "general ideas can have no objective reality out of the understanding;" that they are a mere product of abstraction and figments themselves *. In respect to his "Theory of Knowledge and Science," which he divided into real and rational, he prepared the way more than he wished for scepticism and empiricism, an admission on the part of his eulogiser, of which we should take note. While he thus undermined the reigning philosophy, he sought in theology to confine the compass of demonstrative knowledge, and rejected all the proofs previously adduced to demonstrate the existence, unity, and eternity of God, declaring all this to be an opposition against faith.

In psychology he had some deep and excellent views; he refuted circumstantially the opinions of the objective form, species, which was regarded as a necessary condition of contemplation and thought. His books were proscribed from the schools at first, generally, afterwards in the year 1341, with especial references to five articles, the last of which was, "that Socrates and Plato, God and the creature, are nothing," without the terms being understood, for Ockham and his disciples placed all their knowledge in words †. In the lists of his opponents are many glorious lights, amongst which we may distinguish again his fellow student Walter Burleigh, styled Doctor Planus et Perspicuus. Born in 1275, he studied at Oxford and Paris, and died in 1337; he wrote a Commentary on Aristotle, and a work *De Vitis et Moribus Philosophorum et Poetarum*. There were also opposed to Ockham

* Comment. in Lib. 1. sent. dist. 2. 4. et. 8.

† P. Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. xiii. 38.

the three celebrated realists, Thomas of Bradwardin, who died Archbishop of Canterbury in 1349; Thomas, of Strasburg, who died as Prior General of the Augustin hermits in 1357; and Marsilius of Inghen, rector of the university of Heidelberg. The two next are the most celebrated nominalists, John Buridan, of Bethune, and Peter d'Aillay. The former taught philosophy and theology at Paris: his rules for the discovery of intermediate ideas, though ridiculed by some, and his inquiries with respect to the will, gained him great celebrity: he held that the will of the soul was determined in its choice by the pleasure or displeasure caused by the object; but the example ascribed to him of the hungry ass between the two bundles of hay, is not found in his writings. Peter d'Aillay, surnamed the Eagle of Gaul, was born in 1350, at Compiègne; he was successively Chancellor of the University of Paris, Bishop of Puy and Cambray, and finally Cardinal. He was an enemy of the confusion which then disunited the scholastic philosophy; his thoughts upon the certainty of human knowledge, and his proofs of the existence and unity of God, are said to be deserving of great attention *. We see next other advocates of nominalism, Robert Holcot, an Englishman, General of the Augustine order, Gregory of Rimini, Richard Suinshead, an English Cistercian monk of Oxford, both of which latter taught at Vienna, the enlightened and candid Heinrich von Hessen, and Heinrich von Oyta, Nicholas Oresmius, Matthew of Cracow, and Gabriel Biel, of Spire, who died professor of theology and philosophy at Tübingen, in 1493. Tenneman says, "that all these were men of great merit, of clear heads, though without any peculiar philosophic talent," which is a sentence that the reader may interpret as he will. In 1339, 1340, 1409, and 1473, the opinions of the nominalists were condemned at Paris, and their writings prohibited, yet their adherents began to be numerous, both there and in the German universities. The metaphysical point of dispute between the two parties respecting general ideas, was accompanied with a much more profound and extensive cause of opposition in their respective modes of thinking. For, in the nominalists, appeared a greater inclination to resist authority,

* Quæst. Super. IV. lib. sent.

and break through the salutary restraints which it imposed, still, as yet both were faithful.

The consequence, however, of this dissension between the two parties, was a declining estimation of all controversial exercises, which Gerson, in his complaints of the state of logic, contributed greatly to bring into disrepute, and, hence, the tendency of the school, and of the public mind, was now more than ever towards mysticism, through weariness and aversion for empty formulas and strife of words. Now come into view some great advocates of that holy ascetic wisdom, which had so brightly illuminated the early Church. Children and poor rustic persons, angels and spirits of just men departed, were now the masters of philosophy in most esteem. John Thaulerius, who taught at Strasburg, of whose admirable conversion we may speak hereafter, and Gerson, who succeeded Peter d'Aillay, as Chancellor of the University of Paris, Nicholas de Clemangis, a bold thinker, rector of the university of Paris in 1393, Thomas Hamerken, or Malleolus, surnamed Kempis, from the place of his birth, in the archbishopric of Cologne, and John Wessel, named by his contemporaries *Lux et Magister Contradictionum*, John of the Cross, and St. Theresa, Louis of Blois, and the Augustinian canon, who styled himself the Idiot, are amongst the precious and bright beaming stones that ingem this hallowed light of Paradise. Then follows Raymund de Sabunde, whose writings on natural theology were remarkable at this period, having taught at Toulouse in 1436. He held that men have two books from God, conveying the knowledge of God and our relation to him, and these are nature and revelation. But now the radiance seems to fade away; for we are arrived at the fifteenth century, when the disorganization of Christendom, in consequence of the Lutheran heresy, and the diminution of faith, indicate that we must proceed no farther in tracing the history of the clean of heart, in relation to the intellectual aspect of the world.

It is remarkable that these founders of a new order of philosophy should avowedly have gone back to the works of the heathen Greeks and Romans, as to the fountain whence they might assuage the thirst which oppressed them for a new knowledge, and that the most prominent result of their labours should be a more exclu-

sive application of the human mind to the pursuit of natural philosophy, and of mere human learning. A formal war against the scholastics was now waged by men, who seemed more inclined to revive the ancient schools of heathen philosophy, than to adhere to any doctrines which had obtained the assent of Christian ages. Every thing was now in repute but the scholastic philosophy; there was the new Platonism, the Cabbala, theosophy and magic, the Aristotelian, Ionic, and atomistic system, and even to the Stoics and Epicureans opened a prospect of revival. Nevertheless, amidst the figures that attract notice from their fatal celebrity, we cannot avoid observing still many holy lights agitated, indeed a little, perhaps, by the conflicting winds around them, but still pure and following in the lustrous track of Heaven.

It is certain that some even of the most faithful Christians were now attracted by this doubtful wisdom, and affected by the general influence. One of the first thinkers, who abandoned the banners of the scholastic philosophy, was the Cardinal Nicolas Casanus, the apologist of learned ignorance, who held the precise seizing of truth to be unattainable, and that we could rise no higher than conjectures. To the propagation of this new Platonism contributed not a little the writings of Marsilius Ficinus, who translated also Plotinus, Jamblichus, and Proclus, and became founder of the Platonic academy, under Cosmus de Medici. His enthusiasm seized John Pico of Mirandula, who possessed vast learning with a deep sense of religion, and an ardent attachment to faith. He had studied the scholastic philosophy, and was convinced that Plato's wisdom was derived from the Mosaic writings, which were to him the treasury of all science and art: to the demonstration of this point was employed his study of the Oriental languages, and of the Cabbalistic writings, and in his old age he wrote an excellent refutation of the astrological errors. But now the radiance which has so long afforded contentment to our eyes has nearly vanished away; the blessed luminaries are gone by, and after them pass along dark and sorrowful figures, misshapen phantoms that seem to mimic with their pale delusive glares the splendour of the saints, the brightness of the clean of heart.

To this period belonged John Reuchlin, the friend and promoter of classical learning, who was a disciple of the

new system of Cabalistic and Platonic philosophy, whose works *de Verbo Mirifico* and *de Arte Cabbalistica*, with those of Cornelius Agrippa, *de Occulta Philosophia*, and *de Incertitudine et Vanitate Scientiarum*, might well have yielded a triumph to the followers of the scholastic wisdom, who were now told that magic was the perfection of philosophy, and who were to find a cynic contempt of all excellence defended with sophistical subtilty.

Paracelsus, born at Einsiedeln, was to reform medicine too by uniting it with the cabalistic learning, expressed in the unintelligible language of Theosophy, which was in the seventeenth century to be the foundation of the Rosenkreuzian society. The titles of books were now all cabalistic, and wonderful, professing as those of Weigelius, to unfold the art of all arts, the secret of all secrets, and, as those of Rosenkreuz, to bring about a general reformation of the whole world, and a universal fraternity. The noble genius of the celebrated natural philosopher and mathematician, Jerome Cardan, of Pavia, was now seen supporting astrology and cabalistic superstition, with all their extravagances of destiny and familiar demons. That remarkable poet, Giordano Bruno, the Italian dominican, was now with restlessness and thirst for renown, preparing the way for his miserable end, by maintaining the imperious pre-eminence of magic and astrology, the eternity of the world, and the system of pantheism, mistaken by his contemporaries for atheism, which was taught by Plotinus in ancient, and by Spinoza in modern times. Aristotle was now studied more than ever, not as in the scholastic ages, in connection with faith, but in opposition to it; for the separation and division of philosophical and theological truth, was supposed to serve as a shield against the danger of heresy.

The disputes respecting the principle of thought and immortality, which divided the two parties of the new Aristotelians, the Averroists and the Alexandrians, obliged the Lateran Council in 1512 to raise its voice in behalf of orthodoxy. Italy now again possessed Peripatetics in Peter Pomponatius of Mantua, Simon Porta of Naples, Paulus Jovius of Como, Julius Cæsar Scaliger, Julius Cæsar Lucilio, Jacob Zabarella, Francis Piccolomini of Sienna, Cæsar Cremonini, Alexander Achillinus of Bologna, named the second Aristotle, and Marcus Antonius

Zimara, whose heathen appellations alone are sufficient to indicate the intellectual revolution which had taken place. The titles too which these men assumed, presented a singular contrast to those worn so humbly by the great luminaries of the Catholic school. Instead of the epithets seraphic, angelic, or illuminated, applied to the scholastic doctors, we have such as are derived from the writings of Pagans, and the language of their blind idolatry : thus, the new theologians, Jurisconsults, Physicians, and all, as Heinsius says, that were great in learning, saluted Joseph Scaliger as “*Doctorum solem—Patris divini sobolem divinam—genus deorum—perpetuum literarum Dictatorem*,” to none of which Daniel Heinsius, the champion of liberty, evinced the slightest objection. They styled him also “*Maximum naturæ opus et miraculum—extremum naturæ conatum**.” It was men on whom such titles were conferred, who with John Sepulveda, the Spaniard, and many of the religious innovators in Germany, were questioning the most important truths, and continuing the separation between natural wisdom and positive faith. Petrus Ramus, to whom adhered Francis Fabricius, the poet Milton, and others, who obtained the title of Ramists, applied himself in his “*Ars bene disserendi*,” embracing logic and rhetoric, to oppose the study of Aristotle, while a third or eclectic party sought to unite his method with the Aristotelian logic of Melanchthon. With less enthusiasm, though equal compromise of Christian truth, did Stoicism now lay claim to converts, whose study of Cicero and Seneca led them to embrace a system of natural morality : of this number were Justus Lipsius, of Isla, near Brussels, who wanted only constancy to be a stoic in his life, as well as in his philosophy, Schoppe, a man, as Tennemann observes, of doubtful character, and Thomas Gattacker, of London, who, with Claude Saumaire, and Daniel Heinsius, brought history to the support of their system. Together with philosophy and religion, the science of politics was now to be reformed, and the Prince of Machiavelli shewed what was in the mind of a statesman, formed not by Giles of Colonna, and the faith of Rome, but by the classics and the study of the world ; while John Bodin, of Angers, in his

* Heinsii Orat. II.

Republic, sought by an intermixture of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, to establish a just medium between democracy and absolute monarchy. The diversity and hostility of views and ideas produced by these heathen studies—the decay of self-confidence which ensued,—the disputes, concerning the certainty of knowledge, and the want of an incontestible principle, led, as was natural, to the development of scepticism, which, in itself, assumed a variety of characters, till the logical deductions from heresy produced their effect upon the multitude, and completed the atmosphere which encompasses the world at the present day, through which men find it irksome or impossible to behold God.

But not in such darkness are we to be dismissed, after beholding the splendid succession of blessed luminaries. Still we may discern those who are of the number of the clean of heart, who see their Maker, and so shine that in their looks accordant our soul finds its delight. Many were the eminent men who still adhered to the principles of the scholastic age, while they pursued with success those branches of philosophy, the cultivation of which had experienced a true and salutary reform. Among these must be pointed out Francis Patritius, who was born at Clessa in Dalmatia, in 1529: he taught philosophy at Ferrara and at Rome, and published *Discussiones Peripateticæ*, in which he supported his theory of light from Aristotle as the principle of all things. Nor should we suffer to pass unnoticed that throng of great physicians who still were Padua's boast—James Zanetino, Sigismund Polcastro, Bartholomeo Montagnana, Bernardine Sperono, Baptist Leonio, Jerome Tiraboscho, Jerome Stephanello, Francis Bonafide. Here, amidst blessed luminaries, we meet again Thomas Campanella, the Calabrian friar of the order of St. Dominick, whom we observed in the last book experiencing the charities of the blessed merciful. As a philosopher, great was his merit. He held that the fountains of all knowledge were revelation and nature; that the former is the foundation of theology, and the latter of philosophy; and that both are only the divine and human history. He had a clear philosophic head, well furnished with knowledge and warmed with a genuine love of truth. His efforts were directed to prove the possibility of a philosophy which would be secure from the doubts of the sceptics, for

which end he lays down in his metaphysics certain incontrovertible principles. In practical philosophy his views were admirable: he showed that endless existence is the highest good, for which all things strive, and which is obtained through religion. Religion, he says, is the way by which the soul passes from the sensual to the spiritual world, or to the highest perfection: religion consists in obedience to God, the observance of duty, and the love of God. His negative merit was great in opposing Atheism, false policy, or Machiavelism, and in the defence of the freedom of thought and the just rights of human reason. In regard to metaphysical studies, the two processions may be seen diverging still farther from each other, but not to the discomfiture of the ancient by the new. While Hobbes, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Spinoza, and Locke were developing the fruits of the modern inquiries in the system of materialism and sensuality, Malebranche, Fardella, and Pascal were enriching the stores of Catholic philosophy with profound and inspiring thoughts, and handing down the precious testimony that the highest and most perfect philosophy is that which confirms or illustrates the doctrines of the Catholic Church. But from celestial courts we must descend. Nought displeased at having thus looked upon the lights which shine distinct amidst the mighty host of Paradise, and marked the earthly course of some in that eternal radiance, which, if we are blessed, reader, in the final judgment we shall see. And now, to use the words of Dante, as the chime of minstrel music, dulcimer and harp, makes pleasant sound to him who heareth not each note, so from the glorious orb which has revolved before us, circling round the cross, with voice still answering voice, a melody ensues, which, though indistinctly heard, with ravishment transports the soul. Such is the result of a passing glimpse at the wisdom of the clean of heart — of those who saw their Maker in light intellectual, replete with love.

CHAPTER VII.

ALTHOUGH, from what has already been observed of the men who philosophized during the ages involved in this history, some light may have been incidentally thrown upon the systems or opinions most generally professed, it will now be expedient to consider what were the great leading features common to them all, and without attempting to analyze the peculiar dogmas of any of the particular schools which attained celebrity, to lead the reader upon such ground as will enable him to discern the essential characteristics which distinguished their philosophy in general from every other system, either in times prior to Christianity, or in these latter ages of the world, wherever the influence of divine faith has been withdrawn. In regard to physical science, their defects have been shown, one might suppose, sufficiently often. It is but just that some attention should be paid to the distinguishing features of their intellect and habit in other respects, and to their success in the cultivation of that higher philosophy which regulates the will and the affections.

There seemed a sort of fatality attending those who sought, in the sixteenth century, to change the religion of the Christian world, that even when approaching ground of metaphysical philosophy, they should never adopt a form of sound words. Luther maintained, at one time, that what is true according to faith may be impossible and absurd according to reason. In *theologia verum est*, he says, in *philosophia simpliciter impossibile et absurdum*.

Wholly opposed to such views, the scholastic wisdom of the clean of heart in ages of faith resulted from the conviction that religion and philosophy were inseparably interwoven with each other in harmonious unity, and that one could never contradict the other. Hegel remarks, that by the fathers of the church philosophy and theology were united and studied in common, and that we see also in the middle ages the same combination of

theology and philosophy. Scholastic philosophy is one and the same with theology. Philosophy is theology, and theology is philosophy. So little were men inclined to suppose that theology could be injured by the other knowledge, that they believed it to be nothing else itself but theology. The whole middle ages understood theology as a scientific knowledge of Christian truth; that is, a knowledge essentially bound up with philosophy*. That such were the views of the fathers, might be shown from many passages of their works. In *sapientia religio, et in religione sapientia est*, says Lactantius; therefore they cannot be separated, because it is the same God who ought to be understood, which is the part of wisdom, and honoured, which belongs to religion†. St. Augustin says that the wisdom of man is piety‡; and St. Gregory Nazianzen calls mystic theology “a sovereign philosophy.” Indeed, St. Augustin lays it down as an article of belief, comprising the sum of human safety, “non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiæ studium, et aliam religionem§.” To the same effect speak all the scholastic doctors of the middle age. Hugo of St. Victor expressly reckons theology as a branch of philosophy, adding, “but this is the sum of philosophy and the perfection of truth||.” “As for what was called philosophy by the Greeks,” says John Scotus Erigena, speaking of its divisions and classifications, “we believe and teach with St. Augustin, that philosophy, which is the love of wisdom, is nothing else but religion; and what proves it to be this is, that we do not receive the sacraments in common with those of whose doctrine we do not approve. What, then, is it to treat of philosophy, unless to lay down the rules of the true religion by which we seek rationally and adore humbly God, who is the first and sovereign cause of all things? Hence it follows that the true philosophy is the true religion, and reciprocally that the true religion is the true philosophy¶.” “Of philosophy there can be no end,” says John of Salisbury, “for it is nothing else but the love of God; and if the

* Hegel, *Philosophie der Religion*, vol. i. 11, 67, 294.

† *De Falsa Sapientia*, IV. 4.

‡ *Enchirid.*

§ *De Vera Relig.* 5.

|| *In Explanat. Cœlest. Hier.* c. i.

¶ *Joan. Erig. de Divina Prædestinatione*, c. i.

love of God be extinguished, the name of philosophy vanishes."

"All studies, therefore, worthy of this name, must tend to the increase of charity; and he who acquires charity or increases in it has gained the highest object of philosophy. This is, therefore, the true and immutable rule of philosophers,—that all reading or learning should be made conducive to truth and charity, and then the choir of all virtues will enter into the soul as if into a temple of God. They err, therefore, and impudently err, who think that philosophy consists in words alone. These are the men who desire the vain reputation of wisdom, and are indifferent to the real possession of truth; then they multiply words, and propose a thousand little questions, and endeavour to perplex others by the intricacy of their language, in order that they may seem more learned than Dædalus. But though eloquence is a most useful and noble study, this loquacity of vain disputants is a thing to be fled from, for he who speaks sophistically is hateful*.

"The order of knowledge, in relation to science," says Henry of Ghent, "is twofold—*ex parte nostra*, and *ex parte rei*: first, *ex parte nostra*, one particular science is ordained to another, when by its means we can more easily come to a knowledge of that other; and secondly, *ex parte rei*, one particular science is ordained to another when it attains but imperfectly what the other attains perfectly: and in these two respects all other sciences are ordained to theology. First, *ex parte nostra*, because by means of them the way is rendered more easy to us of attaining to it; for the order of our discipline requires that we should ascend from the imperfect to the perfect, and from things better to things less known; and therefore the knowledge of God is the last end of our intention in philosophic sciences, and all other sciences teach us to come to the knowledge of God; they teach us by things more known, that is, by creatures, in which causes are seen in their effects. Secondly, *ex parte rei*, all other sciences are ordained to theology, as if minor to the principal, both practically and speculatively: practically, because theology considers and has regard to the last end, to which are really ordained the bounds of all

* De Nugis Curial. cap. 12.

practical sciences, which are in themselves imperfect, and which can only be perfected by being reduced to their last end, at present by grace, hereafter by glory; and therefore we read, vain are all men in whom is not the science of God. Similarly speculative sciences are ordained to theology, because it is the chief of them all, inasmuch as it considers the first principles under which all other things are contained that are considered in other sciences, which have no perfect knowledge unless so far as they are ordained to their first principles; and therefore it is said to be metaphysically impossible to know the quiddities of sensible sciences, if the first cause of all be not known; therefore it is of theology to judge all other sciences, as far as regards the direction given to them being understood, approving those things that are well said, and reprobating the contrary*.”

Aristotle had said, “Since many things are ordained for one, it is necessary that one should be a ruler over them, and the rest in a state of subjection;” upon which St. Thomas observes, that all sciences and arts are ordained to one end, namely, to the perfection of man, which is his beatitude; therefore it is necessary that one of them should be the ruler of all others†. “Since the end of all philosophy,” saith he, “is within the end of theology, and is ordained to that, theology ought to command all other sciences, and make use of them‡;” so that, as Ventura concludes, “there was a certain hierarchy maintained among the sciences as well as among persons, from a firm conviction that if it were overthrown anarchy would be introduced into the intellectual, in the same manner as, in the absence of rule, it would be seen to invade the political order.”

Christianity received letters and sciences when they fled from the fury of barbarians. The Church protected and nourished them, but she retained them in their natural order of ethics, logic, and physics, which accords precedence to what relates to God. This was the order received in the schools of Christian nations during the ages of faith, when the reason and office of pursuing the wisdom of Christians were as well known to all men

* Henricus Gandav. tom, i. art. vii. q. ix. f. 59.

† In Metaphys. Aristot. lib. i. Prolog.

‡ In lib. i. Sent. Prolog.

as if in front of every school and university had been inscribed these divine words, "*Quærite primum Regnum Dei et hæc omnia adjicientur vobis.*"

"There is a certain secular science," says St. Bernard, "which inebriates not with charity, but with curiosity, which fills but does not nourish, inflates and does not edify, swells and does not strengthen. And there is another science of which St. Augustin says, "There is a science which is not of vain things or of curious things, but of those by means of which that wholesome faith which leads to true beatitude is begotten, nourished, defended, and confirmed; and this is called the gift of the Holy Spirit." "This," adds St. Bonaventura, "is the science of the saints." Therefore he concludes with St. Jerome, in his Prologue upon the Bible, "Let us learn, while on earth, the science that will remain with us in heaven; for it would be unworthy if I had to labour so much for a science which was to end in death."

Such was the general view of philosophy in ages of faith; therefore, as an able French writer observes, that which belonged to the middle ages is not to be sought for in the sensation of Condillac, nor in the sterile ideology of his disciples—nor in the psychological observations of the Scotch school, nor in the eclecticism which pretends to compose truth out of errors, nor in the boasted oracles of common sense—here are only opinions, theories, systems—but it was in the Christian religion that the philosophy of the middle ages consisted. It had no need to listen to the voice of one man, or of all men, for it heard a superhuman voice—that voice which was heard in Eden, in the desert of Sennaar, on Mount Horeb, on Sinai, on the Jordan, on Golgotha *.

"However great, during that period, was the passion for knowledge," says Staudenmaier, "however acute and profound were the geniuses which it impelled, however incapable any subject was found to keep down their bold aspiring flight, still their spirit remained ever humble, and they honoured the gospel as that higher light in which we see the first true light. Their disposition to inquiry continued still free, while their spirit remained believing. Thus to Erigena divine revelation was the

* L'Abbé Bautain, de l'Enseignement de la Philosophie en France.

immovable foundation-stone of truth, and upon faith he declared must science first unfold itself. "The salvation of faithful souls," he says, "is to believe in the one principle of all things which are truly preached, and what are truly believed to understand *." "The beginning of ratiocination," he says again, "I consider must be assumed from divine words; for from them, of necessity, all inquiry after truth must take its beginning †."

This was the spirit of Anselm, too, and of all the scholastics of the middle age. Their efforts were all directed towards the true reason and intelligence in God, to which region of light their looks were fixedly bent; and therefore in all phenomena, affairs, and institutions, they evinced an ideal impression—the lofty, the sublime, the fixed, and the eternal. As in their structures—especially in their churches, whose turrets sparkled in the skies—all was directed towards them, the highest object being nothing else but the circle of God's infinity, as it were to show symbolically the Divine Being, so in like manner the scholastic had no other limit in science than that of raising upon the foundation of the Christian faith a structure of truth, which with its pinnacles might reach heaven. The eternal, which no mortal can give, was supplied in revelation: and on that holy ground resting secure and immovable, they sought to introduce into the kingdom of nature and of spirit, in terminations and syllogisms, in theses and antitheses, in questions and responses, in distinctions and conclusions, the shafts and columns of the system, to strengthen and represent the one truth. Thus revealed itself the fulness of substantial truth, in the most varied form; while streamed forth also light in multifarious revelations, which was still ever referred to the one primal and inexhaustible essence ‡."

"The summum bonum," says Peter the Venerable, "is a happy eternity. Who, then," he continues, "will dare to say that he philosophizes who, with all his efforts, tends not to eternal beatitude, but to eternal misery §?"

The philosophy of the ages of faith was, in effect, the philosophy of the Psalms—the philosophy of the church

* De Div. Nat. ii. c. 20.

† II. c. 15.

‡ Johan. Scot. i. 452.

§ S. Pet. Ven. Epist. lib. i. 9. Bib. Cluniacens.

offices, of those sacred chaunts which rose to God from solemn choirs in every region of the earth; it was the philosophy which Jesus, the Divine Master, taught the multitude. What did he teach them, seeing the crowds? "The eight beatitudes," replies St. Bernardine of Sienna; for the general understanding of which that holy teacher invites his auditors to consider the dignity of the doctrine, the sublimity of the doctrine, and the utility of the doctrine*. "Do you seek," he asks, "abstruse philosophy?—study the beatitudes." "What so hidden," demands St. Bernard, "as that poverty is blessed?—quid tam absconditum quam paupertatem esse beatam? do you seek agreeable study, read the blessing pronounced upon the poor." "Fœlix doctrina," exclaims St. Bernardine of Sienna, "quæ a beatitudine initium sumit†." Hence the writers of the middle ages generally style the monks philosophers, on the principle that their simplicity was philosophy—"simplicitas monachi philosophia est‡." St. Chrysostom always calls the monastic discipline philosophy, and so it continued to be termed. "How was he not a philosopher," asks Paschasius Radbert, in the ninth century, speaking of St. Adalhard, abbot of Corby; "for wisdom," he continues, quoting the definition of St. Isidore§, "is the knowledge of human and divine things, with the study of living virtuously. Therefore, without doubt, he who followed the things of God prudently, with God's grace, and did not indolently neglect those of men, was a true philosopher or a wise man, as far as it is lawful to call any man wise||." Bacchiarius was called by St. Gennadius "vir Christianæ philosophiæ," which only meant, as Mabillon observes, that he was a monk, so generally was that title applied by the ancients to all of the monastic order¶.

Though this may surprise some modern readers, it gave no offence to intelligences of the first order. Paschal would subscribe to such definitions; for he says that the most philosophic part of the lives of Plato and

* S. Bern. Senens. tom. iii. De Beat. Serm. IV.

† Id. iii. s. v.

‡ Joan. Saris. de Nug. 34.

§ Isidori Etymolog. lib. ii. 3.

|| Vita S. Adalh. Mabill. Acta, SS. Ord. Bened. Sæc. iv. p. 1.

¶ De Studiis Monasticis, p. 1.

Aristotle was that they lived simply and tranquilly * ; in which, assuredly, they might be surpassed by the meanest lay brother of a Franciscan convent. Nor were these views confined to the scholastic doctors and the avowed teachers of religious truth : we find them adopted by the illustrious scholars and promoters of secular learning, who were devoted to the explanation of the ancient philosophy. John Picus of Mirandula, writing to Aldus Manutius, and sending a copy of Homer, exhorts him to persevere in philosophic studies, in these terms :—“ Accinge ad philosophiam, sed hac lege ut memineris nullam esse philosophiam, quæ a mysteriorum veritate nos avocet ; philosophia veritatem quærit ; theologia invenit, religio possidet †.” Hermolaus Barbarus, indeed, expressly says that he admires him for loving so the simple majesty of the ancient theologians ‡.

Certainly some of our modern writers will smile to hear the names of the authors most familiar to this philosopher. His nephew, John Francis Picus, says, “ Of the ancient doctors of the church he had such a knowledge, that one might suppose he had spent his life in studying them alone ; and with the later theologians, who use the style which is called Parisian, he was so familiar, that if any one proposed suddenly any of their most abstruse questions, he used to solve them with such acuteness that you would suppose he had before his eyes all the sayings of that particular doctor in question. Moreover, he was equally conversant with all schools ; nor was he addicted to any one in such a manner as to despise the other §.” Baptist the Mantuan, the Carmelite poet, writes accordingly to Francis Picus Mirandula, on the death of his uncle, saying, “ This immortal honour was wanting to your family,—that to the most ancient nobility, the abundance of wealth and military renown, should be added the excellence of so much wisdom,—

“ Picus Joannes, cœlos, elementa, Deumque
Doctus, adhuc juvenis, sanctificatus obit ||.”

* Pensées, i. 9.

† Joan P. Mir. Epist. lib. i. 6.

‡ Epist. lib. ii. 5.

§ In Vita Ejus.

|| J. F. Pic. Mir. Epist. lib. i.

Francis Picus of Mirandula, himself no obscure philosopher, writing to Albertus Pius, says of his uncle, "Let us write often to each other; let us converse often on sacred subjects, for by such conversation those who live well are strengthened, and their minds turned, as if wheels, by demons, ill-affected and contaminated, are thus fixed and purified*." Indeed it is impossible to read these letters without observing, that in the judgment of their author piety was the true philosophy. All the illustrious men of that time evinced the same conviction. "Wonder not," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Francis Musano, "that we blend medicine and the lyre with studies of theology; for the body is healed by medicine, the spirit by sounds and odours and songs, and the mind, being divine, by theology†." Writing to Philip Carduccio, he places all philosophy and happiness in charity. "Charity," he says, "rather than science, transfers man to God‡." Again, in his work *De Christiana Religione*, addressed to Lorenzo the physician, he admits of nothing in philosophy but what is sanctioned by the church. "O happy ages!" he exclaims, "which preserved this divine conjunction of wisdom and religion. O miserable times, whenever there shall be a separation and divorce between knowledge and goodness! If learning be transferred to the profane, it will deserve to be styled an instrument of lasciviousness and malice, rather than science. The most precious pearls of religion left to be treated of by the ignorant, would be trodden under the feet of swine! O men, citizens of a celestial country, and inhabitants of earth! let us deliver philosophy, the sacred gift of God, from impiety if we can; and we can if we wish. I exhort and beseech, therefore, all philosophers to attain to holy religion, and all priests diligently to apply to the study of wisdom§."

"To the moral notions of the ancients," says another of these eminent philosophers, "we must add the things that belong to a Christian; for our religion is the only true philosophy. *Hæc enim sola vera philosophia est, religio nostra*; of which not to have the most diligent observance, both on account of itself and also of the

* Joan. F. Pic. Mir. Epist. lib. ii.

† Mars. Ficini Epist. lib. i.

‡ Epist. lib. vii.

§ Id.

expectation of the future world being eternal, while the present is but for a moment, would indicate insanity *." And again, in another of his works, Cardan says, "It is absurd to suppose that the Christian life is one thing, and the civil life worthy of a philosopher another; for both are one and the same. Therefore, if any one should holily fear the precepts of the gospel, he would have in them a great part, nay, generally all of what is required †."

These views of men, in ages of faith, were not the result of vague reverence for religion, and the mere impressions of piety, but the careful and legitimate deductions of a patient and enlightened intelligence. These deep observers were not ignorant of the fact remarked by St. Augustin, that "no one can enter into truth unless by charity," or as a later philosopher observes, that "the religious feeling is the beginning of the development of reason." Doubtless Novalis partook largely of their penetration when he remarked that "pure mathematics are religion, that without enthusiasm, there can be no mathematics, that the highest life is mathematical, that all historical knowledge strives to become mathematical, that the mathematical power is the arranging, ordaining power, that all mathematical knowledge strives to become philosophical, animated, rational—then poetical, afterwards moral, and at last religious ‡." To such a thinker as Novalis how shallow must appear the declamation of the moderns, reprobatng the philosophy of the middle ages as being nothing else but theology! Undoubtedly it may appear strange and obsolete, if the index of intellectual progress be the views of those eminent men of a great northern school, which are accommodated equally to the metaphysical system of the materialists and to that of the partizans of Berkeley §—which leave aside the questions of the immateriality of the mind, the immortality of the soul, the doctrine of a future life, and that of rewards and punishments hereafter. But the name of psychology would never have been applied to such a science in the middle ages. Lately,

* Hieron. Cardan, *Prudentia Civilis*, cap. lx.

† *De Utilitate ex Adversis Capienda*, cap. xxiv.

‡ *Schriften*, ii. 235.

§ D. Stewart, *Essays*, Prelim. Dis.

even in the parliament of France, there has been heard one eloquent voice assuming a higher tone: there has been found a statesman who “would not reduce religious instruction to a lesson on some given day or hour—who would have it administered at all times, that the whole of education should be impregnated with it, that it should be felt as the constant atmosphere of the school.” His efforts were in vain; but he was defeated by votes, not by reason, which had pronounced long before, by the mouth of St. Thomas, that “the highest perfection to which man can arrive consists in the full knowledge of God, and that he can obtain it only by the operation and teaching of God who knows perfectly himself*.” Even the heathen writers had profounder views of the true nature of philosophic study than those who prevailed against the proposed measure that was conformable to this sentence. Who knows not that the whole character of the philosophy of the eastern nations is that of a divine revelation, formed according to the various fancies of sages †?

Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Antonio Ziliolo Sophronio, reminds him that the whole philosophy of the ancients is nothing but a learned religion. “What shall I say,” he adds, “of Mercurius Trismigistus, all whose disputations begin with vows and end with sacrifices ‡?” “Nisi quæstio de diis dijudicatur,” says Cicero, “in summo errore necesse est homines atque in maximarum rerum ignoratione versari §.” So far were the ancient philosophers from inclining to the modern opinion, that morality, jurisprudence, and metaphysics can be best established by removing religion from the foundation.

Aristotle reckons theology among the three branches of speculative philosophy, mathematics and physics being the other two ||; and the Pythagoreans said that man being born for contemplation, ought to apply to theological wisdom, *θεολογικῆς σοφίας δεῖ ἀντιποιεῖσθαι ¶*. But above all it is Plato and Socrates, who on this point are in

* S. Thom. q. xiv. De Fide, art. 10.

† Tennemann, Geschichte der Phil. 9.

‡ M. Ficini Epist. lib. viii.

§ De Nat. Deor. 1.

|| Methaphys. lib. vi.

¶ Jamblich. Adhort. ad Phil. cap. 4.

accordance with the scholastic wisdom. If St. Augustine says that science is as it were a certain instrument by which the edifice of charity ought to rise, and that unless it be directed to this end, it avails not, or rather it is greatly injurious to the possessor *, Socrates judges of the utility of the sciences, solely by the degree of their tendency to facilitate the search of what is noble and good in morals; and if pursued with any other end, he pronounces them useless †. So far from understanding by philosophy, the study of mechanical arts, which he terms base, or the usual routine in education, which is all concerned, he says, with what is born and subject to perish from depending on the growth or decay of the body, he affirms that the only philosophy which he seeks, is that which can draw the soul from contingencies and time to the essential and immortal existence ‡. He shews how philosophy leads to fellowship with the highest things, as being related to what is divine and eternal §; and he defines a philosopher to be one who always seeks instruction, concerning not ephemeral, perishable things, but the immortal nature ||. Truly, as Ventura remarks, when Plato taught that philosophers ought to govern a state, he took care to guard his hearers from a misconception of the men to whom he alluded.

“Are we to regard as philosophers,” he asks, “such as pursue the arts of mathematics, and similar studies? By no means. These are only like philosophers ¶.” Philosophy, according to him, is the knowledge and study of God, and a philosopher is the man who withdraws his mind from sensible things to the study of God, which his disciple Plotinus so well understood, that his philosophy seems nothing else but a pure asceticism, or the contemplation of the divine nature. St. Augustin says, “that Plato believed philosophy to consist in the love of God, hoc esse philosophari amare Deum, unde vult esse philosophum amatorem Dei **.” Hence, we can easily understand why the more mystical of the Fathers so greatly loved Plato, who believed that all science and art would sink to the ground, unless referred to God.

* Epist. 55.

† Id. lib. vii.

|| Id. lib. vi.

† De Repub. lib. vii.

§ Id. lib. x.

¶ Id. lib. v.

** De Civit. Dei, viii. 9.

In reading some of the books of that philosopher, concerning the regulation of the affections, the desire of the chief good, and the union of souls with the Divinity, one might at times forget that the page before the eye is not from the work of some of our ascetical writers. If Plato were again on earth, it is these mystic writings of Catholics, full of divine wisdom, that he would regard as greatly philosophical, and not the frigid and empty treatises on sciences and morals, of men without religion professing to be philosophers *; some of whom resemble perhaps those who appeared in an early age of Christianity, who, as St. Augustin tells us, used to call themselves Platonicians, through a shame of being called Christians, lest a name should be common to them with the vulgar †.

The scholastic lights illuminated the depths of the intellectual world, teaching men to remark with Richard of St. Victor, how the philosophy of Christians is in the folly of the cross; for, as he observes, especially against wisdom did he sin who wished to obtain knowledge by robbery. Think, then, if you can, he continues, how just it was in the one, and how pious in the other, who is the wisdom of God, for the Father to avenge the injury of his Son, and for the Son to forgive it; and, as contraries are cured by contraries, mark how fitting and ingenious it was, that he who fell by folly should rise again by wisdom; that he to whom falsehood had been the cause of perdition, might find safety in the way of truth; and that he who incurred death by the word of the devil, might return to life by the word of God ‡. "Our country is Paradise," says St. Gregory, "to which, having seen Jesus, we must, like the Magi, return by a different way from that by which we left it; for we left our own country by being proud, by being disobedient, by following visible things, by tasting forbidden food; but we must return to it by weeping, by obeying, by despising visible things and curbing the appetite of the flesh: for we who departed from the joys of Paradise by delectation, are recalled to them by tears §." The philosophy of the ages of faith was the return to Paradise,

* De Methodo Philosophandi, cap. iii. a. 1.

† De Civit. Dei, lib. xiii. 16.

‡ Richard. de S. Vict. De Incarnatione Verbi, i. c. xi.

§ S. Greg. Pap. Hom. X. in Evang.

it was therefore religious, scholastical and ascetic combined, or, in other words, the knowledge and the love of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT the philosophy of the clean of heart, beholding God, should be exposed to objections from men unpurified, who see only creatures, and who even invent unmeaning terms, to avoid confessing Him who made them; that it should seem to them defective and false, and that it should be the object also of unwearied and bitter invective, can be a matter of surprise to no one who reflects upon the different relations of truth, and who has been accustomed to trace to their source the various intellectual phenomena presented in the conduct of mankind. Such a result would have reasonably been expected, *a priori*, if it were only from considering the fact which Novalis remarks, that “instinctively the learned are hostile to the spiritual state, and that they must wage a mutual war when they are separated, because they tend to the same place; for this separation, as he observes, appeared soon after the revolution of the sixteenth century, when men of letters having quarrelled with the scholastic theologians, on being reproved by them for rashly philosophizing, and for adopting Pagan language, passed readily over to the side of Luther*; and in latter times it became still more manifest while so many of the learned were ranking knowledge and faith in opposition to each other†.

Moreover, as this penetrating observer remarks, men have at present various ideas of philosophy, while that of its catholicity seems by all rejected. One says, philosophy must teach nothing anticonventional, it must chime in with national customs and religions. Another, philosophy must have nothing in common with poetry; another, it must not be attainable by all minds; it must

* Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. xvii. 443.

† Schriften, ii. 323.

have a language of its own, it must have no religion ; thus, every one dresses it up in some form dearest to his own heart. Many change their philosophy as their servants ; at last, they hate all kinds, and choose to have none *. There were, however, besides this, other causes to produce the same impression, for such pains had been taken to misrepresent the whole history of the middle ages, the philosophic writings of the period were known to so few, all works of a theological character being excluded from consideration, that men, whose pursuits had been with science rather than erudition, might naturally fall into the common style of writing respecting them, and, like the illustrious author of a discourse on the history of philosophy, qualify the scholastic period as “the opake of nature and of soul, in which only the perverse activity of the alchemists had, from time to time, struck out a doubtful spark.” “If the logic of that gloomy period,” says this eminent philosopher, “could be justly described as the art of talking unintelligibly on matters of which we are ignorant, its physics might, with equal truth, be summed up as a deliberate preference of ignorance to knowledge, in matters of every day’s experience and use”—a sentence surfeited with truth, for, unquestionably, if the one could be so described with justice, the other might be summed up as this author proposes ; but, unfortunately, for his conclusion, every one who takes the trouble to consult the writings of the schoolmen, perceives that the first step is impossible, and it may be permitted us to hope therefore, that this truly great and impartial observer of nature will be found in future works, when touching upon such ground, to renounce the style of our “family libraries,” and adopt in preference the tone of Leibnitz, who, after complaining of the deplorable and almost insuperable aversion of the moderns for the doctrines of the Catholic church adds, that wise men should endeavour to defend that ancient Catholic philosophy against the new theories of the metaphysicians, who, like children, insult the greatest and most illustrious of men †.

With respect to the charges brought against the philo-

* Novalis Schriften, ii. 134.

† System. Theolog. 234.

sophers of the middle ages, I know not which to select in first place for consideration, for though numerous, they seem to be all brought forward with the same vehemence as being each productive of overwhelming results. Yet, setting aside those which relate to errors in physical science, when fairly met and investigated, the difficulty changes, for then the chief embarrassment arises from inability to discover which is least undeserving of reply. What can the modern objectors expect from a patient hearing of this cause, by men of competent information? Do they think it enough to say in general, that they despise them? Truly, the judges will not see either in their lives or writings, in their deeds, or in their genius, what any reasonable man can despise; Lord Bacon, in praise of Antoninus Pius, says, "that he had the patient and subtle wit of a schoolman; a fruit, no doubt, of the exceeding tranquillity and serenity of his mind, which being no ways charged or encumbered either with fears, remorse, or scruples, but having been noted for a man of the purest goodness, without all fiction or affectation, made his mind continually present and entire." Such a comparison does not seem to favour much the modern opinion respecting the characteristic features of the human mind during the reign of scholastic philosophy.

After collecting, however, the accusations of modern writers, we shall find that they may in general be summed up by the contradictory charge that there was no inquiry, and that there was too much inquiry; and both seem advanced occasionally by nearly all modern writers, who approach the subject. "We have found in these ages," says Guizot, "only monuments of an intellectual activity which was merely practical, devoted to the wants of real life, and foreign to the research of truth; this is the state into which the human mind had fallen in the seventh and during the first half of the eighth century." Brown is not satisfied with such limitations, for in his lectures on philosophy, in which he alludes to that of the middle ages, he designates it as being throughout very barbarous and futile. "No beautiful moral speculations," he says, "were then to compensate the poverty of intellectual science." He attempts to show that the questions which agitated the schools, respecting the philosophy of mind, morals, and natural theology, were

absurd, and concludes, by applying to them the words of Seneca, *Indignandum de isto, non disputandum est*. We may commence our reply by admitting that the first part of this charge is true, and that Brown had just grounds for rejecting any limits, since it was at all times true during the ages of faith; so that we may even accept with gratitude the definition proposed by the illustrious author of the history of the inductive sciences, and designate them as “the stationary period,” during which, within the sphere of morals and religion, enquiry had altogether ceased.

“Philosophic search,” as Tennemann well remarks, “was excluded by the Christian religion, which revealed the will of God.” What human reason had so long looked for, was in the Christian doctrine found; and, as St. Irenæus said, “it was useless to seek truth from others, which was easily learned from the Church, in which, as in a treasury, the Apostles had placed all truths, in order that every one who wished might take from it the drink of life*.” This was not a thesis of philosophy, a question of science; it was an authoritative promulgation, which required submission not enquiry. So we read of the first disciples, that they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in celebrating the eucharist. Nothing within this sphere could be less open to the genius of enquiry. “Let certainty yield to faith, glory to salvation,” it is Tertullian who thus speaks, “faith is the rule. To know nothing against the rule is to know all things; therefore what resemblance between a philosopher and a Christian, a disciple of Greece and one of heaven? a negotiator of fame and one of salvation, an operator of words and one of actions, a builder and a destroyer of things, an interpolator of error and a restorer of truth†.” “Unhappy man,” exclaims St. Augustin, “who knoweth all these things, and thee alone knoweth not; but blessed is he who knoweth thee, although he should be ignorant of all the rest‡.”

The school is but a faithful echo of these voices of the primitive Church. “Non oportet sapientiam quærere,” says its angel, “nisi in Christo §,” and elsewhere he uses these remarkable words, “In cruce inveniuntur

* *Advers. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 4.*

† *Apologet. 46.*

‡ *Confess. v. 4.*

§ *Lect. I. in c. 2. Ep. ad Col.*

omnia, de quibus homines gloriari solent*.” “In the cross,” he adds, “is the perfection of the whole law, and the whole art of living virtuously: as he who should have a book containing all science, would seek only to know that one book, so also we should no longer seek any thing but Christ alone †.” The theology of the school was wholly founded on Revelation. “The knowledge of this science,” says St. Thomas, “is by Revelation ‡.” Christian philosophers consequently had not to speculate like the numerous enquirers mentioned by Aristotle in his treatise de Anima, and to examine whether the soul were fire or air, whether it consisted in motion or perception, or the negation of body, whether it is called τὸ ζῆν, from warmth, or ψυχὴν, from the cold of breathing air. Neither had they to enquire whether the duties of life were such as the laws of God and of the Church required; whether the truths of religion were such as they had received or not. Such continued to be the exemptions of philosophy through the middle ages, without an attempt being made to suppress them.

Behold how many silent adorers in the scholastic halls where Richard and Aquinas sat. Lo, the crucifix, and the image of the Virgin Mother, and the solemn throng with fingers placed upon the lip, to signify that beyond certain limits there is an end of disputation! Here is no place for loquacious speculators; however beautiful may be their theories, their questions are all set at rest, there can be no reviving them. You are indignant? But perpetual, sober, tranquil reason will not participate in your disdain; on the contrary, if, at the spectacle of your mockery, ridiculing the silence which reigns in this monastic region, a wandering fancy, reverting to the tales of old, should liken you to the poet in the shades, who brought a similar charge against his wiser brother, it will prompt a reply resembling that which was given in his defence—“I love that silence; it delights me no less than the eloquence of those who now make speeches §.”

“Fides non in quæstione philosophiæ est,” says St. Hilary, “sed in Evangelii doctrina ||.” “It would be

* Lect. IV. in c. 6. Ep. ad Gal.

† 1 P. Q. I. a. 6. in c.

|| In lib. ad Constant. August.

‡ Lect. I. in c. 2.

§ Ranæ, 917.

absurd," says St. Nilus to Alexander the grammarian, "if we, who ascend to the mount of the lofty Christian philosophy, were again to turn back to the darksome valley of vain glory, after the exploded prejudices of the gentiles, and after being perfected in prudence, were to relapse to second childhood, making void the cross through a false philosophy*."

This was the wisdom of the city as well as of the desert, during ages of faith. "Philosophy seeks truth," says Picus of Mirandula, "Religion finds it." So that in fact it was the language of the school which Dante heard in Paradise, when Beatrice said—

"——— Be not as the lamb,
That, fickle wanton, leaves its mother's milk,
To dally with itself in idle play †."

The Catholic church, as we shall soon see, accepted the service of philosophy, but utterly rejected all attempts to found truth on any human speculations or discoveries. Men of vast capacity and of brilliant genius might rise up from time to time, and offer to do this, as if by way of imparting to her fresh life and efficiency: she paid them no attention; she wanted none of them. She had already a philosophy complete and perfected. Every thing within her sphere had been determined and arranged ages ago. In that sense, as Clemens Alexandrinus says, "Faith was perfect learning, and nothing was wanting to perfect faith ‡," therefore, when it was proposed by any one to supply what he might choose to term a deficiency, by engaging in enquiries which supposed, by the very fact of their institution, that philosophy ought to have a different beginning and a different basis, the only return that he could expect for his proffered service, was a reply like that of St. Paulinus, "Vacat tibi ut philosophus sis, non vacat tibi ut Christianus sis? Verte potius sententiam, et non tam disseras magna quam facias." Her children in fact, as Pascal says, had no need of such philosophic lectures§, no need of these "beautiful moral speculations." "It would be monstrous," says Peter the Venerable, "to

* Lib. ii. Epist. 43.

† V.

‡ Pædag. lib. i. c. 6.

§ Pensées, i. 11.

dispute at this time of the world, concerning the faith, now that the prince of this world is cast out from the world; now that Christ rules from sea to sea, now that all are made docile to the teaching of God; now that, according to Isaiah, 'the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;' now that Satan, after the long attacks of Pagans and the disputation of heretics, hath so exhausted his quiver of iniquity, that there remains to him no longer any arrow that can injure*." At the time when such words were written, men could hardly have anticipated the arrival of an epoch like that which heard the illustrious Malebranche declaring, "that the readers of Descartes should feel a secret joy for having been born in an age and country so happy, that they had not to be at the pains of going back to Pagan times and to the extremity of the earth, to seek among barbarians and strangers for a doctor of truth†."

Even, independent of the logical deduction from having clearly established the grounds of wisdom, the inutility and folly of all enquiry, within a certain range of subjects, was generally recognised. "I think," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that divine secrets should be venerated rather than discussed‡," adding elsewhere, "Verius enim invenit amans quam disputans§."

In ages of faith, men shrunk from engaging in disputation with those idle and sceptical persons, described by St. Augustin, "Paratiores ad interrogandum, quam capaciores ad intelligendum||." "If the human mind," says he, "would yield to clearest reason, there would not be need for many words: it is true, as we have to combat its irrational motions, there is necessity for more discourse, that we may cause them not only to see but to feel and handle truth. And yet, what end will there be of disquisition, and what limit to discourse, if we think that we must always answer those who answer us? For many speak iniquity and are indefatigably vain, who

* S. Pet. Ven. Ab. Clun. Epist. lib. ii. 1.

† Recherche de la Vérité, lib. vi.

‡ De Sacramentis, lib. ii. p. viii. c. 3.

§ Hugo S. Vict. de Ecclesiast. Officiis, ix.

|| De Civit. Dei, xv. 1.

do not care what they say, provided they can contradict us *.” “Our disputes ought to be prohibited and punished as other verbal crimes,” says Montaigne, “we grow angry, first against the reasons, then against the men: we dispute only to contradict; and each one contradicting and being contradicted, the result of the dispute is to lose and annihilate truth.”

If Catholic philosophers did not lay such stress upon the evidence of natural reasons, in relation to the great truths concerning human life here and hereafter, it was from their experience of the difficulty of finding in nature what would convince antagonists of this kind, and also from feeling assured that, as Paschal says, “this knowledge, without Jesus Christ, is useless and sterile.” When a man had been persuaded of certain immaterial truths dependant on a first truth in which they subsist, and which is called God, they would not have regarded him as far advanced in philosophy, that is, in the work of his salvation. Fenelon speaks the sense of all these ages where he says, “Beware of those great reasoners who languish over learning, and are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Their curiosity is a spiritual avarice which is insatiable; they are like conquerors who ravage the earth without possessing it †.”

“If any one be so curious,” said Vincent of Beauvais, “that he seeks not on account of any known cause, but is carried away by the mere love of knowing unknown things, he is to be distinguished from a student, for he is only curious and does not love unknown things, but rather hates them, so as to wish that none should exist, and that all things might be known ‡.” Thus speaks the great encyclopædist of the middle ages. Never, in short, was any conviction more profound, and more generally imparted, than that expressed by Fenelon, that “The mind has no less need of fasting than the body; that it also has its intemperance; that the fast of silence, recollection, and prayer is essential, as is also the cessation occasionally of external action, and whatever distracts the soul”—that intellectual activity, when it is continual and without order, dries up and exhausts the interior,—that it is not enough to act and to give, that

* Id. lib. ii. c. 1.

† Epit. 20.

‡ Vinc. Bell. Speculum Doctrinale, lib. i. c. 25.

one must receive and be nourished, yielding up oneself in peace to every divine impression. "You are too much accustomed to mental application," says that truly wise prelate to one who conversed much with Jansenists, "which leaves your interior void, and prevents you from remembering the secret presence of God. This propensity to argument is greatly to be feared.* The people whom you frequent are infinitely dry, argumentative, critical, and opposed to the true interior life. While you listen to them you will hear only an interminable reasoning and a dangerous curiosity, which will insensibly withdraw you from grace to cast you back upon your own nature. Make then your greedy mind fast, make it keep silence, lead it to rest.—*Requiescite pusillum*. God will then work more within it—If you will always be at work, you will not leave him liberty to act. O it is dangerous to be a busy-body in the interior life! *Vacate, et videte quoniam ego sum Deus*.—That is the true Sabbath of the Lord. This cessation of the soul is a great sacrifice."

These thoughts unfold at once the gulf which separates the men of ages of faith from those of the modern intellectual cultivation. The immense distance is apparent from these words. And now, again, a painful task devolves upon us; for I do not see how, in justice to men that are gone by, we can avoid throwing a glance at the opponents of the school around us, who pursue the study of philosophy, in order to ascertain whether their operations tend to invalidate the judgment of the "Stationary Period." Sooth, if the love of inquiry and the thirst of knowledge and the confidence of a personal illumination were sufficient for the purposes of philosophy, there would be no ground at present for complaint. Where is there a door closed against the speculator who promises to give the last touch to reformation? Where are there not triumphs prepared for those who, as St. Augustin says, are indefatigably vain? At present, as in Plato's time, one might justly affirm that "if those who wish to taste of every science, and who go anxiously to all places of instruction, and who are insatiable in following teachers, are to be styled philosophers, there will be a vast crowd of such philosophers;" and truly we might add, too, with Glaucus, "many of them strange kind of men—*ἄσποιοι*." For in this class must then be

reckoned all frequenters of spectacles, and all lovers of rumour and of hearing lessons, who let out their ears for hire, never failing to attend on every occasion in cities and villages, whenever any thing is going forward. Socrates, however, replies that these men are not to be styled philosophers, for they have only some resemblance to philosophers—*ἀλλ' ὁμοίους μὲν φιλοσόφοις*. But that real philosophers are those who love the spectacle of truth—*τοὺς τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας* *.

St. Clement of Alexandria remarks, that the Greeks themselves used to call their busy inquisitive sages sophists, and cites the words of Sophon the poet, and also of Cratinus,—

οἷον σοφιστῶν σμῆνος ἀνεδιφήσατε †.

These were, however, the men of most reputation, and the most successful in realizing a fortune.

Protagoras, the famous sophist, having arrived in Athens, Hippocrates, the son of Apollodorus, came running before light to awaken Socrates and inform him of the circumstance. He knocked, and came rushing in, crying with a loud voice, “Socrates, are you asleep or awake?—Protagoras is come! He arrived late last night, and I would have hastened to inform you, but that it was night before I could reach you; so the moment I awoke from first sleep I came hastening to you.” “What,” replies Socrates, “has Protagoras done you any injury?” “Nay,” replies the youth, laughing; “but, O Socrates! he alone is wise, and to learn of him I would expend my all, and all the wealth of friends; and I have come to beg that you will speak to him concerning me, and persuade him to make me wise also. It is true I have never seen him and never heard him, for I was a child at the time of his former visit to Athens; but, O Socrates! all men praise him, and say that he is the most able of sophists. But why do we not fly to him, that we may find him within? Let us go.” “My good fellow,” replies Socrates, “let us not go, for it is very early, but let us wait here until it be light, and then let us go; for Protagoras stays much within: so take courage; we shall probably find him at home.” On arriving, they find the

* De Repub. lib. v.

† Stromat. i. 3.

door shut. The porter, a certain eunuch, was oppressed with the multitude of sophists who used to come to the house; so that when they knocked, he opened angrily, and looking at them, said, "Umph! some sophists! He is not at leisure." And so saying, with both hands he violently shut the door. Again they knocked, and he replied without opening the door, "Did you not hear, men, that he is not at leisure?" "But, O good man!" the strangers replied, "we have come desiring to see Protagoras. We are not sophists ourselves: therefore announce our arrival." Soon afterwards the man opened the door*.

A scene like this would not be strange, at present, in Paris or in London, where something similar is passing every day; only with this difference, that instead of there being only one Socrates to look on, there are as many Socrateses as there are Catholics, conscious of their own position, or men already weary of the spectacle of human errors.

St. Augustin had heard great things of the eloquence of Faustus the Manichæan. "Only wait till you hear him," was the general advice he received. Disappointment, however, was his impression when the sophist had spoken. St. Augustin was then in his twenty-ninth year, and, as a French writer remarks, at that age one has generally discovered the vanity of the word of man.

Not to proceed with observations which will be called for when we come to speak of the method of philosophy in ages of faith, one may deplore here the necessity which so many have created for themselves of returning to those inquiries, concerning every duty and the foundation of all our hopes, from which the human mind had been long so happily delivered. "O Christ, it is too true! thy eclipse is very dark," exclaims Lamartine; but he should have added, to those who must seek the cause of it in themselves. The earth, indeed, has cast its shadow upon many. "We walk," as he observes, "in an age when every thing falls with a great crash. The dust of twenty centuries, in their overthrow, covers every thing; darkness and light float confusedly before our eyes; one cries, lo! truth is in the city; and another, lo! it is in the wilderness."

* Plato, Protag.

In what do the moderns agree? In philosophy separated from religion, pursued as an independent study; systems are opposed to systems, theories overthrow theories, opinions and principles destroy each other. True there are inquiries enough, but of what nature? "Some questions," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "are worthy of being punished, such as that which demands proof of a Providence; since it is manifest, from the aspect of all visible things, that there is a Providence *." On this principle there would be more need of a censor than of a logician, in some modern schools. It is the tribunals which can best attest what has been learned from these giants, these impious sons of earth, who like madmen turn one another to ridicule, each thinking himself exclusively in possession of truth. No, it is a vain boast of Tiedman, "that the history of philosophy offers us a perspective of consolation and joy, and that the human reason once awakened has never retrograded, but advanced without ceasing;" for the amount of all is only that men have endeavoured to revive the ancient impieties, which time, the enemy of error, had destroyed. Indeed, the same author refutes himself, and confesses, a little before, that it presents "a miserable and tearful spectacle." Who can enumerate the sects which now exist in philosophy? Nor does Degerando supply a more cheering picture of its condition. Tiedman himself complains that the great men of these latter times have left incomplete many things relative to first notions and principles, and that sufficient care has not been taken to determine the foundations of the structure. What Seneca says of theories in his day may be applied to the grand investigations and beautiful speculations which Professor Brown prefers to the scholastic philosophy. "They are not a remedy for the soul, but an exercise for the wit;" serving, as Cicero says, not to utility, but only to amuse the mind. "All their disputation," he says, "seems to have conferred no benefit upon men, but only *delectationem quamdam otii*;" or, as Lactantius says, they did not dispute that they might teach, *sed ut se oblectent in otio*. After many reformations in philosophy, came the Wolfian reformation, which was soon left to be reformed by others; and at length, after three centuries of refor-

* Stromat. lib. v.

mations, Degerando now says that a new thorough reformation is absolutely necessary, for that as yet it has never been effected.

Really, if we were to ask what is found at present in these regions of philosophy, that are said to be mystical and spiritual, and not Catholic, the reply might be made, without satiric exaggeration, in the words of Trugæus, who says, on his return from the sky, that he had found nothing but

*ψυχὰς δὴ ἢ τρεῖς διδυραμβοδιδασκάλων **.

What do I see in this land of independent choosers? Truly, as contrasted with what we have left in the regions of philosophy, sanctified and illumined by the Catholic faith, I do not know how one could better qualify it than in the words of the ancient poet, which express what Bacchus and Xanthus saw on first reaching the shores of the dead,—

———— *σκότον καὶ βόρβορον*—

mud and darkness.

If these philosophers were to be asked by one of the old holy fathers of the monastic order what they have done for men, they could not reply more to the purpose than by imitating the style of the poet in the shades,—“ We have taught them to vote, to cry Hear and Hip ; to say, I am free to confess ; to ask, Will it pay ? is there good security ? to distinguish, in metaphysics, the I-hood and the not-I-hood—in diplomacy, non-intervention and co-operation. Alas ! we cannot expect that they will confess, what is equally true, that they have rendered them independent of all morality, but what each man’s passion dictates—fond of fame and revolution—that they have put it into the heads of young men to drink poison, and smother themselves with charcoal, and cut their own throats, in rivalry of Brutus, to show their hate of kings. The conclusion might be in the sentence of the church at Lauds, on the fourth feria,—“ *Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia : gloriantes ; recedant vetera de ore vestro, quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est.*”

But let us return to ages of faith, and examine whether

* Aristoph. Pax, 829.

it be indeed a fact that an end was put to all inquiry; for though unquestionably men did not then philosophize with a view to discover religious and moral truths, there are innumerable testimonies which seem utterly at variance with such an opinion. What! were there no inquiries, no beautiful investigations, when we are told by Hugo of St. Victor that "the whole life of man was in question?" and that "as long as he lives he inquires? No one wishes to be deceived," he continues, "not even those who may wish to deceive. This shows that nothing is more proper to the heart of man than truth; but the perverse seek truth where there is not salvation*."

"Christianity, in its origin," as Staudenmaier observes, "did not indeed assume a scientific form. The Divine Spirit manifested its power first in producing a divine life; but it was in the natural order of things, and certainly not repugnant to its divine object, that this life should subsequently become the subject of reflections and abstractions, when from without, after various struggles, the minds of men penetrated deeper into it, and demanded what it was." That there was no indifference, in the middle ages, with regard to such discussions, is clear from the fact of the predominance of the scholastic philosophy.

The admonitions of Hugo de St. Victor show that there was even need of warning men from passing beyond the proper limits of inquiry. "Many are the questions of men," saith he; "so long as they live they always inquire. Would that they were as studious to seek goodness as they are curious to discover truth! It is common to all men to seek truth, even to those who love not goodness. Many seek truth without goodness, but goodness is the companion of truth. Truth comes not readily without goodness; or if it come, it does not come from those parts where is salvation. Men inquire whether their sins return to them after having been forgiven, if they again fall; they wish to know the evil, but they do not wish so much to avoid it†." Many things can be asked, if all things ought to be asked which can be asked. You ask about the state of the soul, on leaving the body. All these things are fit subjects for fear, rather than for

* Hugo S. Vict. *Erudit. Theolog. ex Miscellan. lib. i. 72.*

† Hugo S. Vict. *de Sacramentis, lib. ii. xiv. c. 9.*

inquiry *. You ask what becomes of the body of Christ? Such are the thoughts of man, that can hardly rest in those things where least of all there should be inquiry †. Again, you say, if I am to love one man as myself, then I must love three or four men more than myself. Such are the questions of men, and thus do they disquiet themselves with their cogitations ‡. St. Anselm says, that questions respecting the foundations and the mysteries of our faith are often proposed, not only by the learned, but also by the illiterate. “De qua quæstione,” he says, alluding to the doctrine of the incarnation, “non solum literati sed etiam illiterati multi quærunt, et rationem ejus desiderant §.” Cardinal Ximenes, amidst all his multiplied cares, had a custom of having philosophical questions proposed at dinner and supper, on which the learned men who always surrounded him disputed ||. The custom even prevailed in some houses of secular nobles.

“The feudal times,” says a modern author, “were a memorable epoch of ardent discussions and of prodigious research ¶.” Nothing but ignorance can induce an unprejudiced person to have a different opinion. In the fifth as well as in the nineteenth century, the maxim of apostolic men has been, “Catholicism has every thing to hope and nothing to fear from the advancement of philosophy.” It checked not, it solicited discussions; and Dante does but use the language of the church in making Beatrice reply, “The thirst of knowledge high whereby thou art inflamed to search the meaning of what here thou seest, the more it warms thee pleases me the more **.” But what were the men, and what were the discussions? Here, again, error is widely spread.

John Picus of Mirandula will be allowed, I suppose, to rank among those who were no mean judges of intellectual merit; and he alludes to Albert the Great in this style:—“Albertus noster, non minus profecto doctrina quam cognomento magnus ††.” Hear how he writes to Hermolaus Barbarus:—“It sometimes shames and

* Id. ii. p. xvi. c. 2.

† Id. ii. p. viii. c. 13.

‡ Id. ii. p. xiii. c. 10.

§ Cur Deus Homo, lib. i. cap. 1.

|| Wad. An. Minor. tom. xvi.

¶ Tableau Hist. des Sciences Occultes, Introduct.

** Par. xxx.

†† Apolog.

grieves me to think of my studies, and of the years which I should have better spent with Thomas, John Scot, and Albert, who lived renowned in their age, and who will live hereafter, not in the schools of grammarians and pedagogues, but crowned in the assemblies of the lovers of wisdom *."

"Say, I pray you, what moves and persuades more powerfully than such writers? They agitate, they carry one away with violence. You see rude and rustic words, but living, but animating, but words that penetrate like darts of fire into the most secret depths of your soul. You say this is barbarous Latinity: this is not Latin, not Roman style. But what hinders, if these philosophers, whom you call barbarous, should have conspired to follow a certain law of speaking? Is it not, then, equally holy with them as the Roman law is with you? Is not this imposition of names arbitrary? Anacharsis makes a solecism with the Athenians; but the Athenians are guilty of the same with the Scythians. In money we do not seek what is the device, but what is the substance; nor would any one exchange pure gold bearing a Teutonic image for base alloy stamped with a Roman symbol. As Cato says '*Vivere sine lingua possumus forte non commode—sed sine corde nullo modo possumus.*' Lucretius writes *de Natura, de Deo, de Providentia*. Let any one of ours write on the same—let John Scot write on it: the one will tell you that atoms are the principles of things—that all things happen by chance; but this he says in Latin, and with elegance. John says what nature attests; but he says it rudely, not in Latin words. Who will, nevertheless, hesitate between them †?"

"Those who now philosophize," says Benedict Accolti Aretinus, "have neglected eloquence, to which the ancients devoted themselves, but not the less have they studied truth. What great masters, within the last four hundred years, have France, Italy, Germany, and Spain produced? What more noble than the schools of philosophers and theologians in Paris, and in some cities of Italy and Spain? Nor do I know to what ancient philosopher, except Plato and Aristotle, Albertus Magnus and blessed Thomas can be compared—who wrote so many

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. Epist. lib. i. 4.

† Id.

things, as if they had never taken rest—so subtilly and copiously investigated all things, that nothing seems to have been hidden from them which the human mind can acquire. Giles of Rome, John Scot, Alexander de Hales, Bonaventura, Francis Maro, Jacobus Forliviensis, Blase of Parma, Ugo of Sienna, Paul the Venetian, and Loy-sius, Marsilius, Innocent V., and Benedict XI., Hugo the Dominican, and John Dominicus, and many others, were all princes of philosophy; nor in the wisdom of sacred theology do the moderns yield to the first doctors of the church, unless to Augustin, who by a certain divine genius surpassed all others. But the moral or mystic senses of the Scriptures, and their admirable abundance, these deliver still better. Nor would I dare to say this, unless I found it was the opinion of the most learned in these arts, to whom I think, on account of their prodigious erudition, faith must be yielded*.” Angelo Politian speaks of Tertullian with admiration†. Indeed he might well do so, in spite of Gibbon’s sneers; and how well did these great men appreciate St. Augustin, who, as Michelet remarks, is an entire world in himself.

“Who will fear to oppose to Plato Augustin?—Thomas, Albert, and Scot to Aristotle?” It is no less learned a philosopher than Francis Picus of Mirandula who speaks. “How many questions,” he continues, “were disputed and exhausted by them which he never touched? The truths of both testaments warmed them, of which he knew nothing. Who doth not perceive that Lactantius equals or perhaps excels Cicero in eloquence? But what shall we say of the rhetorical power of Jerome? Whoever has read him need not be told what that is. I omit Cyprian, Rufinus, Ambrose, Paulinus, Augustin, Severus, Hilary, Leo, and many others, who are equal to the ancient orators; and if we regard that part of philosophy more especially which embraces practice, how far are the Gentiles surpassed by our men who have written sums of theology—Alexander, Thomas, Henry, Albert,

* Bend. Accolti Aretini de Præstantia Virorum sui ævi Dialog. Thes. Antiq. Ital. IX.

† Ang. Politian. Epist. iv.

and, above all, Gregory, in his Commentary on the Book of Job * ?”

Such were the views of the great Italian scholars of the fifteenth century. Let us even hear men at open variance with the school. “As for myself,” says Heinsius, “I confess I gladly study Gregory the theologian, in whose writings eloquence and erudition contend with religion; and I never feel such an elevation of mind as when I read his account of the life and studies and death of Basil †. Basil and Gregory are my delights, of whom I cannot but admire—in the one such great facility with care, and in the other such mighty force of language with piety. I see the gentle eloquence of Theodoret, his simple candour in interpreting without any ambition, a full and nervous body of erudition in confuting error, and a great knowledge of antiquity. What shall I say of the force of Tertullian, of the vast erudition of Clemens, of the tragic buskin of Hilary, of the candour and facility of Chrysostom, of the digressions sweeter than honey, of the acute and powerful disputations of an Augustin;—what of the exact industry of a Jerome, or of the diffuse and truly Ciceronian eloquence of a Lactantius;—what of my ancient loves, that sweetest Bernard, or that first Leo, who poured forth as many divine apophthegms as he uttered sentences ‡ ?”

Now with the ancient fathers the schoolmen were thoroughly imbued. One can never be sure, in reading Henry of Ghent, whether the sentence be his own or one of Augustin or Chrysostom. Their merit, therefore, may be judged of from that one observation; and in fact, “from the vast range of European literature during the middle ages,” says a modern historian, “it would not be difficult to select works which, for invention, might confer honour on the noblest of our poets, and which, for depth of thought and acuteness of reasoning, have not since been equalled by the most celebrated of our philosophers §.” Staudenmaier remarks, that in the writings of John Scot we find not only the ideas of Plato, Aristotle,

* J. F. P. Mirand. de Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philosophiæ, lib. i. cap. 7.

† Heinsii Orat. IX.

‡ D. Heinsii Orat. VIII.

§ Lardner, Cab. Encycl. Hist. of Mid. Age, iv. 316.

Clemens of Alexandria, and Augustin, but also those of Leibnitz, Schelling, Hegel, Baader, and other illustrious men of modern times; his genius being not that of an individual, but rather that of humanity itself. He embraced the whole middle ages, and united in harmony within himself both the scholastic philosophy and mysticism. He is an Anselm in mind, a Bernard in feeling; he was not of any one age, but he embraced all times *. But it is asked, what was the object of their discussions? were not their abilities misapplied? Truly I am astonished to hear such an opinion advocated by men professing the true wisdom. In the first place, what error of ancient or of the present times opposed to the Catholic philosophy was not then considered and refuted? "The cunning and impatient race of heretics who disturb the peace of the saints are of this use," says St. Augustin, "that in order to defend the Catholic faith against them, many things are considered more diligently, understood more clearly, and more constantly preached †." When Luther and his peers arose, they were unable to broach a single opinion which had not been long before philosophically as well as theologically weighed and found wanting. The arguments against the Catholic rule of faith, against the supremacy of Rome, against indulgences, against the religious orders, against the doctrine of the blessed Eucharist,—all had, ages before, been calmly heard and solidly refuted. Again, the Monologium, Prosologium, and the treatise Contra Insipientem of St. Anselm, in which he brings the most clear and elaborate proof of the existence of God, will show how well that age was defended against atheists. The anonymous monk of Ratisbon, whose book on his temptations and various fortunes was published by Mabillon, unfolds for refutation thoughts which are the secret of much infidelity at the present day ‡: and in their general expositions of the Christian doctrine, for every step they took care to have such ground as was admitted by all kinds of adversaries; so that the disciple says to St. Anselm, "You have so proved the doctrine of the incarnation, that if a few things were removed from our books,

* Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft, seiner Zeit. 39.

† De Civ. Dei, xvi. 2.

‡ Vetera Analect. 108.

such as concerning the Trinity and Adam, you have satisfied the reason, not alone of Jews, but also of Pagans *."

The objections of modern infidels, taking in a gross literal sense the figurative and imperfect expressions of theologians in relation to God, are all answered in advance by the Master of the Sentences, Peter Lombard †.

Guizot, after censuring the form and connection of the books of the middle age, admits that they are very remarkable monuments of the activity and richness of the human mind. "We find in them," he says, "many vast and original views: questions are often solved by them in their profoundest depths; the light of philosophical truth, of literary beauty, shines out each instant. The vein is covered in the mine, but it contains much metal, and deserves to be worked ‡."

The scholastic rind is ridiculed, but, after all, as Staudenmaier says, "the form of dialogue in which so many of these works are written is philosophy itself—the inward alternate speech of the speculative spirit, which at the same time is moved by the most powerful feeling. Truth produces itself before our eyes, by a living process; and through this dramatic style these works have that air of perpetual freshness which imparts to them an eternal youth §."

Truly, notwithstanding what has been so often repeated respecting the barbarism and folly of the scholastic disputes by men who seem practically to regard no questions of importance but such as affect the pleasure and profit of animal life, nothing can shake my conviction that it was a sublime spectacle to behold the scholastic crowd in the Gothic halls of the monastery of the middle ages, where debate was held concerning the awful and magnificent subjects which are presented by religion to the contemplation of man. Some idea of the impression which it could produce upon the youth assembled can be formed by those who have lately heard the lectures in the college of St. Stanislaus at Paris, before the studious disciples of that house, and the philosophers and poets who gained admittance to hear them.

* Cur. Deus Homo, 22.

† Lib. i. dist. xlv.

‡ Cours d'Hist. Mod. vol. i. 220.

§ Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit. 482.

What noble and sublime speculations were pursued in humble dependence and submission to the authority of God's word! It is an honourable contest of those who love not themselves, but truth; it is a splendid disputation; there is nothing contrary to purity and decorum, nothing ignoble of turpitude and shame, nothing involved or tortuous. Compare the questions and distinctions of Peter Lombard with those of Plato and Cicero, and how dry, wearisome, and unprofitable seem all the speculations of the heathen philosophers in comparison. The style of the latter may be more pure—it is, of course, classical; but what superior majesty and grace in the conceptions of the Christian disputants! How much more extensive, too, was the field open to them, and with what ardour and with what subtilty did they cultivate it! Assuredly the monastic school suffers not in comparison with the spots where Plato taught.

Do you desire sublime subjects, profound discussions, conducted at least in the solemn and impressive language which belongs to earnestness and conviction? Where can you be satisfied if you do not find them in the meditations of St. Anselm, or in the hints for meditation suggested in innumerable treatises by St. Bonaventura, so admirable for the order, and precision, and depth of the thoughts? Such as where he shows the sevenfold ascent of the soul of man, from meditating on the passion of Jesus, the two modes of ascent by the gift of wisdom and understanding, the ascent by the gift of counsel, the ascent by the gift of fortitude, the ascent by the gift of knowledge, the ascent by the gift of piety, the ascent by the gift of fear; the developement of which propositions, in most affecting language, forms a perfect epitome of the whole Christian wisdom *

What philosophy in the numerous treatises, in form of dialogues, composed by Honorius Augustodunensis, the ardent disciple of St. Anselm, or in the profound disquisitions of Hugo de St. Victor, on the origin of evil †, or in the treatise of St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, than which perhaps the human mind has never produced anything more sublime? The most subtle objections that can be proposed against the Christian doctrines are here

* *Stimul. Div. Amoris*, p. 1. cap. 7.

† *Summæ Senten. Tract. iii.*

stated, almost in the very terms of the late French infidels, and refuted with an admirable power of dialectics. An age which had only heard the questions of Hugo of St. Victor on St. Paul's Epistles, or the sublime meditations of Richard, his great disciple, on the doctrines of faith, could never have been justly accused of shunning deep and useful investigations.

What high questions respecting the mysteries of creation do we find in the works of Duns Scotus? The infidels of our age would there find some of their own interrogations, and would be invited to consider "*Utrum Deus possit aliquid creare?*" as if the first cause were sometimes more determinate to producing an effect than at others, and not always the same immediately*.

How far behind are many at present in their reasoning, forgetting those who, with Hugo of St. Victor and Boethius, knew that neither is foreknowledge the cause of things nor are things the cause of foreknowledge, as otherwise, what is temporal would be the cause of what is eternal, and that foreknowledge is improperly ascribed to God, as in him nothing is future, nothing past, since his knowledge can neither be increased nor diminished†. How admirable again their manner of reconciling liberty with grace, saying with St. Augustin, "*Tanto liberior quanto sanior: tanto sanior quanto divinæ gratiæ subiectior*‡." The importance of such views will appear from observing the evils which have arisen in later times, from false opinions on the subject which they involve.

What shall I say of the Angel of the School? Truly those who have drunk deep of his wisdom will prefer smiling in silence, to any apology before the bar of those who now arraign him. Pope John the twenty-second said that his wisdom was itself miraculous. "*Wondrous truly it is,*" says Anthony Possevin, "*how rich and fruitful was his mind, how perspicuous on every subject, how full of divine and human philosophy*§."

But take others, open Henry of Ghent and read all the first part of his sum, and then say whether, in the middle ages, He, who did provide Augustine of his lore, had not raised up men competent to follow even that

* Duns Scoti lib. ii. Sent. Dist. 1. 9. 2.

† Hugo of S. Vict. Sum. Sentent. Tract 1. 12.

‡ Ep. ad Hilar. § Appar. Sac. 2.

renowned doctor of the church, treating on the nature of the soul*.

But in all the great luminaries of the School there are important questions, there are just, profound views, there is logical power, there is vast erudition! It is not dreams or vanities of men, or fables of poets, or speculations of tradesmen that they will explain. You will hear the voice of wisdom, the traditions of the friends of God in all ages of the world, illustrations, admonitions, precepts. They dispute concerning nature and the immortality of the soul; they dispute on the contempt of death, which they saw daily before their eyes; they dispute like the illustrious professor who has lately amazed our metropolis† on the light which science throws upon religion. To use the words of a recent historian, "we may ransack in vain the whole realm of philosophy for more profound disquisitions into the nature and relations of things‡." And indeed if these scholastic philosophers were again to come on earth, they might address the moderns in Cicero's words, and say "When we hear your lectures we are surprised that you should thus disdain us." *Nobis enim ista quæsitæ, à vobis descripta, notata, præcepta sunt; omniumque rerum-publicarum rectiones, genera, status, mutationes, leges etiam et instituta ac mores civitatum perscripsimus. Eloquentiæ vero, quæ et principibus maxime ornamento est, et qua te audivimus valere plurimum, quantum tibi ex monumentis nostris addidisses §?*

In truth, how do the subjects of our disquisitions fade before the sublime grandeur of their accustomed themes, —the origin of evil, the fall of man, original sin? The very titles of their books are pregnant with thought: "*Liber unde malum*" is that of one of the volumes left to the monastic library of Durham, by the bishop, Hugh Pudsy, in the twelfth century: those prefixed to the books of Richard of St. Victor are alone enough to put to shame the modern philosophy. Then what profound wisdom, what piercing views into the secrets of nature, yea, even what an atmosphere of poetry do we find whenever we assist at their debates? And remark too,

* In his Xth book, *De Trinitate*. † Dr. Wiseman.

‡ *Hist. of Mid. Ages*, Lardner, Cyclop.

§ *De Finibus*, lib. iv.

how it is only in the Catholic schools that such questions can be discussed with serenity and joy, for that which reveals God to the clean of heart, covers other men with darkness, with cold impenetrable gloom.

——— βορβόρω θ' ὕδωρ
λαμπρὸν μαιίνων, οὐ ποθ' εὐρήσεις ποτόν *.

—if you mix earth with the limpid source, you will find no remedy for your thirst.

Milton felt this, and therefore, in describing Satan and his cursed crew, he appoints to them as a punishment the exercises of the school.—

“ Others apart sat on a hill retired
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Of good and evil much they argued, then
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion, and apathy, and glory, and shame.”

Milton had conversed with the new instructors, and had heard their vain wisdom and false philosophy, which, from the tongue of Calvin and his followers, could blasphemously ascribe despair to God, and envelope, with clouds of old and new delusions, points at which more wise than they had erred: Dante, on the contrary, had been long an ardent disciple in the Catholic school, where, as Marsilius Ficinus remarks of the question of predestination, “Love was made to solve all problems, for what more voluntary than love? and yet what more necessary †?” Thus the reason of their having formed such different notions of controversy is explained.

Certainly the former must have conducted these enquiries in a strange manner to suggest such an idea to the philosophic mind of one who loved them. The theological questions which the Protestant poet appoints as a task for the damned in hell, are deemed, by the bard of Catholic Ages, as an exercise for the blessed not unworthy paradise. Indeed Catholic philosophers expressly ascribed the triumphs of their poets to their having imbibed the spirit and even the language of

* Eumen. 694.

† Mars. Ficin. Epist. lib. i. ad Joan. Cavalcanti.

the school. "Dante is grand and sublime! What marvel," continues John Picus of Mirandula, "since philosophising, nature compels him to be so when treating on God, on the soul, on the blessed, and repeating what Thomas, what Augustin wrote concerning them, whose writings he so frequently studied with assiduity, deeply meditating on them? It was not so admirable in Dante to have done this, as it would have been shameful not to have done it. If he flieth sublime it is the wings of the subject which carry him on high*."

But it is time to cut short this part of our discourse, and indeed there are moments when one might be inclined to think that such defence is superfluous; since those who are considered by many as at the head of the social progress, are beginning to reject philosophy with defiance, on the very ground that the results of the habits which it engenders are favourable to what they consider ancient superstition, and inconsistent with the kind of civilization which they wish to propagate. Philosophy, poetry, and literature, are regarded by them with disgust as anti-revolutionary, and therefore, in their estimation, as degrading to the nature of man. Both in Germany and France many writers are found professing hopes that they may live to see men become wilder, and a conviction that in the rudeness of a savage state must be looked for the ultimate reform and triumph of humanity. Such views are not perhaps so novel or so unconnected with the religious revolution of the sixteenth century as we might at first suppose: but I have not time to investigate this point.

Let us return to the more common objections against the scholastic philosophy.

We are told that the ingenuity of its disputants was generally exercised in strange and puerile subtilties, but though this is not the occasion which I shall choose for showing the contrary, one cannot I think hear the charge without perceiving that what is brought forward to shame them must at once turn to their praise; for if the speculations of St. Thomas are sometimes spun fine, and if his divisions run to niceties, this was the fault of the speculative refining genius of the Arabians whom he had undertaken to pursue and confute throughout their whole

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. Epist. lib. i. 3.

system: and besides these "strange and puerile subtleties" are not the general but the occasional exercise of scholastic writers. If it be asked, why did it become so at all? I would answer, let the moderns reply who are obliged to return to the Pagan disputations, from the need of which the scholastic philosophers felt themselves delivered. Let those repeat the objection who have contributed, all over Europe, to the solemn opening of debates, which shake the first elements of all human knowledge, and the very foundation and security of social life.

That neglect of the higher objects of knowledge, which Tennemann ascribes to the scholastic philosophy, was the result of a conviction that those higher objects, having been already established by revelation, were beyond the proper sphere of its researches; and if this writer finds, under the yoke of authority, insipidity, a spirit of minuteness in dissection and division, he admits having found also there "a dialectic exercise of reason, quickness, and subtilty of thought, extension of the sphere of dogmatical metaphysics, ingenious and acute explanation of theological ideas, and a deep speculative spirit*."

The ancient sages would not have deemed the subtle investigations of the school unphilosophical, for Pythagoras expressly recommended to his disciples an intent and unwearied examination of difficult speculations, and a ruminating upon them†. In fact the insignificance of the subject itself sometimes chosen by the scholastics, only proves their conviction, that it was not expedient to treat important truths in that manner, or decorous to exercise the argumentative faculty upon points that were of faith. In the school indeed occasionally we hear of things that do almost mock the grasp of thought, but in general, what after all were these subtle questions? It might be for a Hugo of St. Victor, in treating of the vanities of the world, to speak ironically of the very important topics on which some scholastics were then vehemently disputing, but assuredly the same privilege cannot, with any justice, be assumed by the authors of

* Geschichte des Phil.

† Jamblich. de Pythagoric. vita, cap. 16.

frivolous and interminable disquisitions, the meaning of which they cannot themselves perhaps comprehend a few months after they have held them,—to whose books every sober mind might devoutly wish such an end as befel two of Cardan's treatises, as he relates with a truly ridiculous gravity*. Is it, I ask, for such men to cry down the ingenious enquiries of the middle ages, which all were concerning, more or less, matters of the utmost interest to the spiritual life, and to the wisdom of thoughtful learned Christians?

Unquestionably, many things seem obscure and involved to the minds of men without moral discipline, which were luminous to the clean of heart. "The mind, reverting still to things of earth," as Dante saith, "strikes darkness from true light†." The observation which concludes the work entitled *Theologia Germanica*, bespeaks indulgence on this very ground.—"If any one should say that these things are very abstruse, he should be reminded that the great folly of the Holy Spirit, to speak so, is far more abstruse than the highest wisdom of the whole world. It is not strange therefore, that these things should seem abstruse to the flesh, for they are divine, of which the flesh cannot judge, and therefore you judge them abstruse in the same manner as a bat would deny that it could see the brightness of day from being accustomed to use the light of night, of which the brightest part is darker than the darkest day." Dante discerned well the cause, and says—

"The Spirit to his proem added things
I understood not, so profound he spake:
Yet not of choice, but through necessity
Mysterious; for his high conception soar'd
Beyond the mark of mortals‡."

At the same time be it observed, no abstruse or subtle discussions were ever held before the people. St. Augustine had shown that it was well and useful sometimes to be silent respecting some truth, on account of the incapacity of hearers; "especially," he added, "if there be cause to fear that we may render those men

* Quos ambos urina felis corruptit.—De libris propriis.

† Purg. XV.

‡ XV.

worse who do not understand us, while we wish to render those who do understand more learned, who, if we were to remain silent, might not indeed become more learned, but neither would they become worse *.” And with respect to other points, really it was somewhat over bold for the teachers of the new religions to think that they were the men justly authorised to convict the scholastics of being unphilosophical.

The questions of the school, in what they are pleased to term the dark ages, were certainly rather of a more metaphysical nature than those which agitated two great nations, under the light of the Reformers, when the portentous discussions were, whether the clergy ought to wear linen surplices and caps, whether steeples ought to be surmounted with weather-cocks or crosses, whether a table should stand in the middle of the church or altar-wise with one side to the wall, whether a good Christian should stand up or sit down at the Gloria Patri; on all which points “their Cathedral men” would never yield one iota: but if the scholastic questions did not lead to such practical results, for these were sufficient to kindle the flames of civil war, at least the laws of God and men had no more reason to fear the disputations of the Scotists and Thomists, than the human intelligence had to apprehend injury or dishonour from enquiring whether the essence of the mind were distinct from its existence, or whether the Deity can love a possible unexisting angel better than an actually existing insect.

To take the speculations of scholastic disputants and to present them to a corrupt society, with all their possible practical consequences eloquently set forth, was the act indeed of a man of genius, but perhaps, to say the least, an act of the greatest literary injustice ever committed. Besides we should greatly err if the modern clamours were to persuade us that the subtle disputations of the middle ages were really thus useless or frivolous. No greater error than such an opinion.

Without touching upon the ground of their curious investigations into the nature and property and combination of numbers, and their application to physics and psychology, in which they at least evinced a familiarity with some of the most remarkable opinions of the

* In lib. de Dono Perseverant. 10.

ancient sages*; and in which they did but follow in the steps of Jerome, Augustin, Origen, Ambrose, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Basil, Hilary, Raban, and Bede†, we need only cite for instance, the dispute between the nominalists and realists, which has already served us to divide the different periods of the scholastic philosophy. Now this was one of the most important that could occupy the human mind. This contest may be traced to the early days of philosophy. According to Plato, ideas pre-existed in the divine intelligence, and are so many archetypes of existing essences; the world of ideas is the true and proper world, the real existence of τὸ ὄντως ὄν. Ideas then, in this sense, are not logical abstractions, but the original living essences, which, in themselves, are unity, though in various and harmonious modes developed. In these ideas which are the divine archetypes of things in the divine intelligence, is the true reality; and Plato knows of nothing else real, but them. Thus is the true ideal, the true real; the *ιδέα* is the *ὄν*, and the *ὄν* the *νοητόν*, both are one. The Stoics with Zeno, on the contrary, held that nothing can be in the mind which was not before in the senses, and that mode and species exist not in the nature of things, but are only a creation of thought. From this view of the validity or invalidity of general ideas, arose the contest in the middle ages, between the realists and the nominalists, the former being those who held with Plato, which included the scholastics of greatest renown, and who, as many edicts declare, could always be followed with the greatest security; the latter, who ascribed only a logical existence to general ideas, those who agreed with Zeno and the Stoics; the former were said to hold *universalia ante rem*, the latter, *universalia post rem*.

Realism, especially as explained by St. Thomas of Aquin and Duns Scot, had in general decidedly the advantage until the end of the middle ages, when nominalism, through Occam, and especially in Germany, made a stand, though then it was no longer the excessive nominalism which Roscelin had first revived; but

* Aristot. Metaph. v. 6. xii. 6. 3. Phys. iii. 4. Brucker, *Convenientia numerorum Pythag. cum ideis Platonis* in S. Mis. Hist. Phil.

† Corn. Agrip. Phil. occult. xi. 3.

Occam's nominalism, which was nearly the same as that of Abailard, which, in the beginning, perhaps, would not have been considered nominalism, but the Platonic realism. It was in fact the middle party between them, though realism also, in Occam's time, was no longer what it was in the time of Anselm. The extreme nominalism has been the parent of Locke's notions; in the middle ages, those who held it were called "conceptualists." There was during that period a third party, which sought to keep peace by holding the doctrine of Aristotle, that universals had a physical existence, and rested in the individual as the form. Thus the three opinions were—with Plato, that universals existed before the object—with Zeno, after the object—and with Aristotle, in the object. The followers of the latter, which was the nominalism of Roscelin, held that universals had no existence excepting in language, and that they were mere names, against which notion Abailard rose, maintaining that general ideas were united with individual perceptions, from which the human reason formed them. Thus, virtually, he gave them a more logical, though he stoutly held that they had an absolute and independent reality; he therefore styled himself an Aristotelian, though in other senses he was more a Platonist. Among the realists, Gilbert de la Porée, and Richard of St. Victor, held wholly with Plato, while Alanus de Insulis, Alexander de Hales, and Vincent of Beauvais, adopted the opinion of Aristotle*.

We should observe, in conclusion, that the contemptuous language respecting the disputants of both sides, in this celebrated controversy, which has been used by some excellent writers, of whom the Père Berthier may be cited as an instance†, can only apply with justice to those who revived it at the close of the fifteenth century, when after many troubles an edict of the king of France was directed against the nominalists, excluding them from the university of Paris, and from all the schools of the kingdom. It would not be fair, however, to quit this charge of over subtilty, dissections, and divisions, against the scholastic philosophy, without taking a glance at the subtilties of its adversaries, in modern times, which have

* Staudenmaier.

† Hist. de l'Eglise Gall. tom. xvii. p. 120.

been substituted in their stead. Every physical compound, according to the universal opinion of men, is truly and really one in substance; but the modern philosophers affirm, that a physical compound has no real unity, and that the substance of a body is only a word, and an abstract idea. It is very difficult for us to believe, they admit, indeed, that when we speak of a rock or a mountain, or a single leaf, or blade of grass as one, we speak of a plurality of independent substances, which have no other unity than in our conception. But so it is, say they, they are one not in nature but in our thought. Why are we to notice such distinctions? Because, as Ventura remarks, it would be hard to calculate all the evil consequences which have followed from their propagation among the people; for all wisdom, order and truth are contained in the contrary proposition, "*quod duobus vel pluribus principiis substantialiter coalescit, est realiter unum.*" For now let us mark the difference: in the first place the scholastics held a real and substantial unity between the human understanding and the known natural truth, which was like the form to matter; for St. Thomas says, "the human mind derives knowledge as matter form; and as matter before it has acquired form does not constitute a determined body, so the understanding, as in infants, before it has received truth, does not constitute reason; and as body consists in the substantial conjunction of matter and form, so reason in the substantial conjunction of truth and intellect; for body is matter endued with form, and reason is intellect enlightened by truth." From this theory of human reason important consequences are to be drawn. If intellect after it has known truth, as matter after it has received form, becomes active, therefore before it has received truth, the intellect can act nothing, discern nothing. Matter does not create form to itself, nor intellect truth, but both receive them; therefore the ancients held that to investigate or inquire by reason, it was not sufficient to possess intellect in potentia, as in infants, before truth has been received; but it could only be done by intellect in actu suo, by intellect conjoined to truth. The moderns, who mix all things together, and use words not in a philosophic manner, but with an oratorical or poetic licence, have taken reason for intellect, destitute of all truth, and then attri

buted all things to it, which the scholastics ascribed not to intellect in potentia, but to intellect enlightened by truth. St. Thomas says, "as the first man was to be a convenient principle of generation of the whole human race, as to body, so also was he to be a convenient principle of instruction as to mind;" which opinion concerning the origin of ideas being universally received, dispensed men from investigations respecting it. So, as from the intellect and truth united proceeded reason, from the intelligent soul and body was man constituted; therefore, again, the scholastics enquired but little as to the relation of soul and body: The condition of operation as they say followed that of essence; for since man is a substantial compound of the intelligent soul and body, all his operations are compounded of soul and body; in like manner in the physical order the scholastics understood body to be really and substantially one, though compounded of two principles, matter and form. Ventura proceeds to show how the modern principle of separation has invaded all orders and branches of science. For first in domestic society, the parents were no more two individuals, but as it were one, and therefore the scholastics never enquired to what point they were bound to remain together, or when they could be separated, for God had made them indissolubly one. The same theory held in public jurisprudence: public society was the substantial and permanent union of the prince and chiefs for the purpose of securing a happy and peaceable state. The same order prevailed in the religious society in which there was a substantial union between the Church and the state, to the increase of nations and the promotion of their liberty, civilization, and security; from which conjunction proceeded the republic of Christian nations. Therefore it was not necessary to investigate the relations of Church and state, as if they had been separate and extraneous powers, which could be opposed to each other in their interests. The Church itself, or the Christian society, was a substantial and permanent union between the Holy See and the Bishops, to the increase of the number of the faithful and the maintenance of faith and integrity of morals, so that when this idea of the unity of the Church possessed all minds, there was no attention paid to moderating the relations between the Holy See and the Bishops. Since the Pontiff, with the

ecclesiastical ministry, are not separable, but are one, and the Bishops separated from the Pontiff are but as branches from the tree which bear no fruit, therefore the public action of the Church was in like manner compound. Lastly, the theory of scientific order resembled that of the social, for as the latter was the substantial conjunction of Church and state, so the scientific order was the substantial conjunction of theology and philosophy, forming the wisdom of Christian nations; therefore the scholastics were at no pains to settle the relations between sacred and profane discipline, for both were indissolubly united in one, and the progress of the scientific order was compounded of both.

From all this, he concludes, how foolishly the moderns ridicule the scholastic wisdom, as if it had been a system of words, since it was concerned with things, and under the guidance of nature and religion, employed to explain all phenomena, powers, rights, offices, laws, and principles, by the rule of unity. This magnificent and most spacious edifice of the ancient wisdom, raised by the labours and studies of the most excellent minds of every Christian age, was overthrown by rash hands, and with it all real and substantial unity. As what was one had become two independent supposits, not substantially but only logically conjoined, the question immediately arose to which of the compounds preference was due. Hence began the enquiries, whether the intellect is in truth, or truth in the intellect,—the soul in the body, or the body in the soul,—the chief power of the Church in the Pope, or in the Bishops,—the state in the Church, or the Church in the state,—and other similar investigations, of which the ancient wisdom knew nothing. The second consequence was the belief that a division between these compounds was possible, and might be legitimate. So now men began to separate things, which God, the author of nature and grace, had joined together by an indissoluble bond; for instance, the intellect from natural truth—the intellect from revealed truth—the Bishops from the Pope—the people from the king—the wife from the husband—and the state from the Church.

Wearied by the attempt to establish relations, the moderns proceeded to ascribe all things to one or other of these principles which they had thus separated; some taught that all belonged to form, others all to matter—

some ascribed all to Revelation, without the concurrence of the intellect—others, all to the intellect without the aid of Revelation—some, all to the prince—others, all to the people; in short, the result was, to separate what God had joined together; they abrogated the unity between the human and divine nature in Christ—between the Pope and the Bishops—between the king and the people—between the husband and wife—between the state and the Church—between philosophy and theology; for, as in buildings of stone, all things in the moral order are so connected and compacted, that the foundation being removed, the whole edifice of wisdom and order and discipline is dissolved; so that they err who think that it was only the order established by Christ in the Church, which was disturbed by the modern subtilties; for it was a wide divorce or separation of all compounds, whether intellectual or philosophical, social or scientific, which parts being disjoined were then easily destroyed in gradual succession. But we must not remain on this ground any longer. Let us proceed to show how the two propositions lately announced, respecting the limits and encouragement given to the spirit of enquiry, which might seem at first to contradict each other, can be reconciled, which will lead us to explain what was the method of philosophy pursued in ages of faith.

CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHY, according to the ancient wisdom, was threefold, as relating to God, to man, and to matter, and, in consequence, there were three modes of argument, from faith, from testimony or reason, and from experiment. I know, indeed, that Lord Bacon notes as deficient that part of judgment, which is the application of the differing kinds of proofs to the differing kinds of subjects, and that his name is on the tongues of men at present, as having reformed philosophy, by first placing it on the basis of experiment; but neither am I ignorant that there is much confusion and error in the ideas of men respecting the state of philosophy in general before his

time, as also concerning the good which he really effected; for that he was the first to show the necessity of experiment within the sphere where such proof is required, is an opinion which no one familiar with the writings of the middle ages can for a moment entertain.

It is not that the attempt by some, as a great modern philosopher says, to lessen the merit of his achievement, by shewing that the inductive method had been practised in many instances, both ancient and modern, by the mere instinct of mankind, can be justly compared to the reasoning of those, who would refuse to Jenner his civic crown, because a few farmers in a remote province had, time out of mind, been acquainted with vaccination. Those who deny him the glory of having introduced inductive reasoning, as a new and hitherto unimagined process, do so not on the ground that a few obscure practitioners in a remote province had used it before his time; but that the most eminent men had possessed a clear perception, and had made a broad announcement of its paramount importance as the Alpha and Omega of science, though they may have wanted the occasion for exemplifying it in their own writings, from having pursued a different order of philosophy, where it would have been inapplicable. Are Roger Bacon, Richard of St. Victor, St. Anselm, and St. Thomas, men whose sentences can be compared to the empirical maxims of an obscure individual in a remote province? Yet all these great philosophers proclaimed it.

Roger Bacon, alluding to physical science, says, “*sine experientia nihil sufficienter sciri potest* *.” I am aware, indeed, that his works are pronounced by a modern distinguished author, to be not only so far beyond his age in the knowledge which they contain, but so different from the temper of the times in his assertion, of the supremacy of experiment, that he finds it difficult to conceive how such a character could then exist †. Heeren finds it difficult to conceive how John of Salisbury could have then existed ‡; but the truth is that the more these philosophers study the middle ages, the

* *Opus Majus*, vi. c. 1.

† Whewell, *Hist. of Induct. Science*, i. 341.

‡ *Gesch. d. Class. Lit.* i. 250.

oftener will they have to encounter such difficulties. With respect to Roger Bacon's assertion of the supremacy of experiment, the difficulty of conceiving his existence then will certainly not prove very great. As well might they wonder how Richard of St. Victor, St. Anselm, Duns Scot, and numberless others, could have then existed: for hear what these teachers lay down: "Some things," says Richard, "we prove by experiment, others we collect by reasoning, and the certainty of others we hold by believing: the first relate to temporal knowledge, the two latter to divine *." "Science is acquired by experiment," says St. Anselm, or one of his disciples, "when a person has certain knowledge of any thing which he has proved. It is also acquired by reason when any one by natural discretion of mind is confirmed in those things, which are to be done or omitted; it is also acquired by reading: but since it inflates, unless charity should edify it, there will be no advantage from it without the will of goodness †."

"Science strictly taken, includes," says Duns Scotus, "four things, namely, that it be certain knowledge without deception and doubt, concerning a thing known necessarily, produced by an evident cause, and applied to the intelligence for being known, by syllogistic argument; in regard to which last condition alone, theology is not a science ‡." Here, indeed, the other order of proofs for other orders of truth is insisted upon, but after such passages, which might easily be multiplied, how can any one justly affirm that it was the universal opinion in the middle ages, established with the authority of a religious creed, that all science might be obtained by the use of reasoning alone; and that logic included the whole of science? If we refer for illustrations to the actual practice of the period, we find but scanty materials, undoubtedly, for the reason that the studies of the most eminent men were not directed to physical science; but it is by no means true, that they are undiscoverable. St. Thomas supports his arguments respecting material things, upon observation and experiment, his maxim being "ubi

* Ric. S. Vict. de Trinitate, lib. i. c. 1.

† S. Anselmi de Similitudinibus, cap. clviii.

‡ Duns Scot. in lib. Sent. Prolog. q. iii. 4.

auctoritas deficit, sequi debemus naturæ conditionem *.” “In all assertions,” saith he, “we ought to follow the nature of things, excepting in regard to those things which are delivered by divine authority, which are above nature †.” It is to Lord Bacon, we are told, that we owe the broad announcement of that grand and fertile principle, that the whole of natural philosophy consists entirely of a series of inductive generalizations, commencing with particulars, and carried up to universal laws. But what then becomes of our chronology, when we find the Angel of the School laying down this proposition that “in acquiring science we must not begin with principles and elements, because, from observing sensible effects, we arrive at the knowledge of principles and of causes ‡.” An instance will best shew his manner of applying the rule. “Some say,” he observes, “that animals, which are now ferocious and disposed to kill other animals, in the pristine state, before the fall, were gentle, not only towards man, but also towards each other; but this is altogether irrational, for the nature of animals is not changed by the sin of man, and it is evident from the formation of their bodies, that it is natural to them to feed on flesh §.” Similar examples might be produced from Duns Scotus; thus, he argues, that man would have died in Paradise, from the permission given to eat of every tree, because a body which needeth aliment must be corruptible ||. St. Thomas protests against the practice of confounding the different kinds of proofs in these words—“I declare, from the beginning of this work, that among the articles which it contains, there are some which do not regard the doctrine of faith, but rather the opinions of philosophy; for it is a thing truly injurious to affirm or deny, that a certain opinion is essential to the Christian doctrine, when it does not even relate to it. St. Augustin says, when I hear a Christian who is ignorant of these systems, which the philosophers have imagined respecting the sky and the stars, the revolutions of the sun and moon, and who adopts a different opinion, I hear him with patience, as a man who expresses his opinion. Elsewhere the

* Sum. P. I. q. cl. art. 1.

† Id. q. xcix. art. 1.

‡ Id. q. lxxxv. art. 8.

§ P. I. q. xcvi. art. 1.

|| Lib. ii. Sent. D. xix. q. 1.

same Augustin speaks thus :—A Christian should beware how he speaks on questions of natural philosophy, as if they were of holy scripture; for an infidel who should hear him deliver absurdities, could not avoid laughing. Thus the Christian would be confused, and the infidel but little edified, for the infidel would conclude that our authors had really these extravagant opinions, and therefore they would despise them to their own eternal ruin. Therefore, the opinions of philosophers should never be proposed as dogmas of faith, or rejected as contrary to faith, when it is not certain that they are so * :” words cited for approval in every encyclopedical work of the middle ages.

Now, after this, I would ask, is it just to affirm that during that period, religious authority was assigned to physical science, by making all supposed truth part of religion—that error in regard to it became wicked, dissent heresy, and that men felt bound to subscribe to all views of natural science propounded by the school? The illustrious author of the history of the inductive sciences, while admitting, that the Copernican system was received in Poland and Germany, from the first, without bigotted opposition, proceeds to affirm that in Italy the Church entertained the persuasion that her authority could not be upheld at all, without maintaining it to be supreme on all points. I am at a loss to conceive his grounds for such an induction. What papal bull, what council, what synod had ever determined questions of pure science? When had the shadow of the papal chair, from which he recoils with such alarm, been ever cast over the speculations of philosophers, as long as they confined them to the inductive sciences?

Copernicus, who was himself an ecclesiastic, so little feared it, that he dedicated the book, containing his discoveries, which he published at the entreaty of Cardinal Schomberg to Pope Paul the Third. The fact is, that the phrases “assuming supreme authority, in all matters of opinion, and the extravagant assumptions of the Church of Rome, which it was impossible sincerely to allow, and necessary to evade by artifice,” signify nothing that ever existed, excepting in the brain of prejudiced adversaries, who, with a view to leading greatest

* Lib. 1. De Genesi.

men like him astray, misrepresented what they chose to resist. The Church may have found it necessary to check scientific men, when they chose to dogmatise and alarm the people by affirming that their physical discoveries could not be questioned without impugning the Scriptures. When Galileo maintained and wanted Rome to declare, that the Copernican system was founded on Scripture, the question was referred to a congregation, which could not but decide, as it did, in the negative. Another congregation, it is to be lamented, declared the new system to be directly opposed to Scripture, and therefore heretical ; but philosophers were allowed to expound it as an hypothesis, to which decision the Minim editors of Newton's Principia, whom the Protestants will persist in calling Jesuits, allude in the terms of their preface, which are so often cited. But, it is to be observed, that these decrees were not dogmatical decisions of the Church, nor of the Holy See, and that, however we may lament the want of caution in the congregations, their proceedings only emanated from their veneration for the written word of God*.

If it had been in the nature of things for the Church to pronounce upon mere physical tenets as such, Copernicus, in a work dedicated to the Pope, would not have alluded to a possible opposition from vain babblers, who, knowing nothing of mathematics, may yet assume the right of judging, on account of some place of Scripture perversely wrested to their purpose. He would have hardly said, "that he heeded them not, and looked upon their judgments as rash and contemptible." That the inductive sciences were not the study of the greatest minds is evident ; that they had made no progress, or not even a beginning, one may be willing to grant ; but still, in the face of such formal announcement of principles, can it be said, without injustice, that "the only kind of philosophy then studied was one, in which no sound physical science could have place." And that "the whole course of men's employments tended to make them not only ignorant of physical truth, but incapable of conceiving its nature?"

Tennemann, observing that Lord Bacon was contem-

* Bergier, Dict. Theol. Art. Science. Riccioli *Almagestum Novum*, tom. i. p. ii. p. 496.

porary with Campanella, remarks, that it was not from those countries which pretend to the glory of producing exclusively vigorous independent habits of thought, but from Italy that the general impulse came, which then directed so many philosophers to the study of the natural sciences, on the established principle that experiment was their only basis. Bernardinus Telesius, who thence became so eminent, was born at Cosenza in 1508, imbued with classical learning at Rome and Milan, and with philosophy and mathematics at Padua. He wrote *De Natura Rerum juxta propria Principia*, and founded at Naples the *Academia Consentina*, to promote experimental science,—becoming an object of displeasure and suspicion, in consequence not of his placing natural philosophy on that basis, but of his wild theories respecting the souls of plants and beasts. In truth, nothing can be more vain than the pretensions that the rejection of authority within the sphere of religion contributed to the recognition of the necessity of employing, within the sphere of physical science, experiment and demonstration. While Catholic philosophers and the religious orders in a body were exulting in having thrown off the yoke of the Stagyrte, declaring that they cared more for one truth than for the whole peripatetic philosophy*, while they were pursuing the method indicated by Richard of St. Victor and St. Thomas, and even expressly exposing the necessity for observing it in the study of natural science, the followers of Luther and Calvin were for a long time the stoutest champions of the authority of Aristotle.

It is clear then that there was no irreconcilable variance between the spirit of the philosophy taught in the middle ages and the principles of inductive science; and so far, therefore, all would be agreed: but the sequel will disclose a difference that I fear cannot be so easily adjusted. There being two classes of truth recognized in Catholic schools, of which one is the object of science, and the other that of faith, there were necessarily two principles of certainty, one for the truths of faith, and the other for those of science; according to the sentence of St. Augustin, “*quod intelligimus debemus rationi, quod credimus auctoritati.*” What we understand we

* *Bibliotheca Script. S. Ord. Cisterciensis*, 186.

owe to reason, including all its modes of application, which is one principle of certainty; what we believe, to authority, which is the other. The claims of authority and of reason to assent were not therefore regarded as antagonist principles, according to the view taken of them by the illustrious historian of the inductive sciences; but as resting on one and the same principle, rooted in the intellectual constitution of man, and essential in its duality to the safe and vigorous action of his mind. Though the question of certainty has been chiefly agitated in ages of doubt, the philosophers of the ages of faith did not fear to meet it; Henry of Ghent treats on it and enquires whether man can know any thing with certainty, and whether every man can know certainly what he knows*. St. Augustin sets out from the knowledge of his own existence: “here,” he says, “I fear no argument of the Academicians, saying, what, if you are deceived? Unquestionably, in knowing that I exist, I am not deceived†.”

“If any one should say that knowledge might be demonstrated by reason, let him be told,” says Clemens Alexandrinus, “that the first principles are not capable of being demonstrated, for they are known not by any art or prudence. From faith then alone do men derive the beginning of all things‡.” The first truth cannot be taught, for it is impossible to teach a person any truth unless you set out from a truth which he knows already. Reason, that divine principle, contains the principles of all the speculative or practical knowledge that we can acquire§. “Primum intelligibile intellectione creari, impossibile||,” says Duns Scotus. To attempt to proceed farther than the *sensus intimus*, belongs only to a vain-glorious ostentation, in constituting the origin of certainty, which was unknown in ages of faith. “There is no intelligence so averse,” says Duns Scotus, “but that it can understand some truth, because the first principles are known to every intelligence from their terms**.”

* Henric. Gand. tom. i. art. i. q. 11. f. 8.

† De Civ. Dei, lib. xi. 26.

‡ Stromat. lib. ii. c. 4.

§ Rozevin sur la Certitude, chap. vii.

|| Theorema ii.

** Lib. II. Sent. d. vii. q. 1.

“By accident,” says St. Thomas, “the intelligence can be deceived in regard to compound things; but in simple things, of which there is no composition in the definitions, we cannot be deceived. Falsehood is in the mind in consequence of composition and division, but in the absolute consideration of the quiddity of any thing which can be known by itself, the intelligence is never deceived *.”

It is important to remark the judgment of the middle ages respecting the value of human reason, in order that we may appreciate the wisdom of the clean of heart in steering clear of the opposite errors into which men of genius, in later times, have so often fallen. “It is not by any of my senses,” says St. Augustin, “that I have known the things which are signified by the words of the question, if a thing be? or what is it? Nor have I seen them any where, excepting in my mind. Let me hear, then, how came they there? for in vain do I inquire of all my senses, to discover by what gate they entered. If they were coloured, or had a sound or a smell or a taste, or could be touched, it would be easy to ascertain this point. I did not learn them on the testimony of any one, but in my own mind I discovered that they were true. There I laid them up as in a treasury, from which I could at any time draw them for my use, enabling me to answer directly, ‘that is true,’ or ‘it is so,’ according to the proposition †.”

How far the philosophers of the middle ages were from exaggerating the dignity of ratiocination, may be gathered from the words of St. Thomas, that “the certainty of reason comes from the intelligence, but the necessity for reason from the imperfection of the intelligence ‡;”—an observation which is otherwise expressed by a modern philosopher, who says, “To God all truth is as by intuition; by us truth is only apprehended through the slow and toilsome process of comparison. In some of our capacities we may perhaps exhibit a faint shadow of a portion of our Maker’s image; but in the reasoning power, of which we sometimes vainly boast, we bear to him, I believe, no resemblance whatever §.” Bayle him-

* 1 P. q. 85. art. 7.

† Confess.

‡ 2. 2. q. 49. art. 5 ad 2.

§ Sedgwick on the Studies of the Universit. 13.

self acknowledges that "there is no one who, in making use of his reason, does not stand in need of God's assistance; without which," he continues, "it is a deceitful guide; for it may be compared to one of those corrosive powders which, after consuming the dead flesh of a wound, would continue to eat into the living, would excavate the bones, and pierce even to the marrow. At first it refutes errors; but, if it be not stopped there, it attacks truths; and when it has liberty, it goes so far that it no longer knows where it is, nor can it find any rest." "Reason," says St. Thomas, "sometimes accepts as true that which is an obstacle to the knowledge of truth*."

On the other hand, the opposite error was avoided with equal sagacity. "It is manifest," says St. Thomas, "that, according to the divine law, man is to observe the order of reason in all things which can come under its use†." "The light of reason," he says elsewhere, "by which we know principles, has been placed in us by God, as a kind of image of uncreated truth which is reflected in us. Thus all human doctrine must draw its efficacy from the virtue of this light. 'Dicitur intelligere quasi intus legere, to consult the interior light of reason.' Manifestly it is God alone who teaches inwardly; to whose operations St. Augustin alludes, saying, 'Noli foras ire; in te ipsum redi; in interiore homine habitat veritas‡.'"

"Not reason, but false reason, is to be guarded against and detested," says Henry of Ghent; "for if their reason," he continues, "had been true, the heretics would not have erred through it; and as we ought not to avoid all words because there is such a thing as falsehood, so we ought not to neglect reason because there is a false reason§."

St. Augustin, in writing against the Academicians, appeals constantly to the light of individual reason, as having in itself that which cannot be doubted||. "To accept true things for false," saith he, "that he should err unwillingly, is not the nature of man, as formed, but it is the penalty of man condemned¶." With this judg-

* Qu. vi. art. 1.

† De Ver. Relig.

|| Id. 73.

† Cont. Gentes, iii. 128.

§ Hen. Gand. 1. art. x. q. 111.

¶ Id. de Lib. Arb. i. 3. c. 18.

ment St. Thomas agrees, saying, "In the state of innocence not only there could not be error, but there could not be even the least false opinion *." Therefore the influence of purity of heart upon the intelligence, which restores man to that state in some measure, can explain many points of contrast in the philosophic history of ages of faith, and of later times. St. Thomas held that it could be shown by natural reason that human souls were incorruptible. Duns Scotus, indeed, maintained the contrary; but, as Melchior Canus observes, alluding only to mathematical demonstration. However, he seems to hold that no certain truth can be known naturally by the intelligence of man, wayfaring, without a special illustration of uncreated light †. This opinion, joined with his maxim that necessary knowledge was never wanting to the human race ‡, can nevertheless afford but little support to the doctrine maintained in the seventeenth century by Pelisson §, that the grounds of certainty lay in the universal and not in the individual reason of men; —an opinion which some eloquent writers have revived in later times, both in France and Italy; but this controversy, which we have lived to see set at rest, did not agitate the middle ages. There is nothing, as Rozevin observes, in the Holy Scripture, or in the decisions of the church, or in the holy Fathers, or in any theologian, to oblige us to recognize the infallible authority of the human race. Universal reason is an abstraction, and it is absurd to ascribe infallibility to an abstraction. St. Thomas says that "it is impossible that the intelligence of all men should be one ||." He commences his sum of theology by demonstrating the existence of God and the divine perfections; and in his four books against the Gentiles, he proves, by way of demonstration, the truth of the Catholic religion; and nowhere does he allege the authority of the human race or of universal reason. He does not, indeed, say that men should acquire the certainty of these truths by way of demonstration, but only that they may so acquire it. He says that the

* II. d. 23. q. 18. art. 6.

† Duns Scot. in lib. Sent. lib. i. dist. iii. q. 4.

‡ Id. Prolog. q. 11.

§ Réflexions sur les Différends de la Religion, sect. xii.

|| P. i. q. 76. art. 2.

existence of God is an article of faith only to him who has not the demonstration of it. The existence of God and other things similar, which one can know by natural reason, as is said in the Epistle to the Romans, are not articles of faith, but preliminaries to these articles; for faith presupposes natural knowledge, as grace presupposes nature: but nothing prevents what is itself susceptible of being demonstrated from being admitted as credible by one who does not possess the demonstration of it*.

We come now, therefore, to consider the other principle of certainty recognized in the ages involved in this history, namely, faith. Our reason sees with certainty that it ought to believe in the divine authority manifested by miracles. "We who are of the faithful," says Richard of St. Victor, "hold nothing to be more certain than that which we apprehend by faith; for it has been divinely revealed to our fathers, and confirmed by so many great and admirable prodigies, that it seems a kind of madness in those who entertain any doubt whatever†." And again, "Truly to a faithful soul nothing ought to be more authentic than that which sounds on the lips of all confirmed by Catholic authority‡." "The divine clemency," saith St. Thomas, "hath provided that even those things which reason can demonstrate should be held by faith; for if one could arrive at the knowledge of God only by way of reason, the human race would remain in the darkness of a profound ignorance; because this knowledge, which is the principal mean of rendering man good and perfect, would arrive only to a very few, and after a long space of time§. There would follow," he says, "three inconveniences from holding that this kind of truth should be left to the discovery of reason: the first, that few men have the disposition and power of arriving by their reason at this highest degree; some being hindered by natural inability, some by occupations, and some by indolence: the second inconvenience is, that such a knowledge can only be acquired in this way after a long time, on account of the truth itself being so

* I. q. 2. art. 2. ad. 1.

† Rich. S. Vict. de Trinitate, p. i. lib. i. c. 2.

‡ Id. i. iv. 20.

§ Cont. Gentes, lib. i. c. 4.

profound, and because in the season of youth the mind is not apt to acquire such knowledge ; so that the human race would continue in the greatest darkness if it were only to acquire truth by means of reason—a way only possible to a few, and to them after a long time : the third inconvenience would be, that in all investigations of human reason much falsehood is mixed, arising from the weakness of our intellect and the crowd of phantoms : and therefore those things would be left in doubt with many, which are capable of being truly demonstrated. So that it is necessary that truth concerning divine things should be exhibited to men, by the way of faith, with fixed certainty.”

A late philosopher, though unconnected visibly with the Catholic school, speaks to the same effect, observing that “man, as a reasoning animal, must always have doubted of his immortality and plan of conduct ; but that with faith there is immediate submission to a divine will, which we are sure is good *.”

This important truth did not escape the penetrating mind of the ancient Fathers ; and we find Consentius alluding to it in his letter to St. Augustin : “If the faith of the holy church,” he says, “were to be acquired by the way of disputation, and not by the piety of believing, no one besides the philosophers and orators could possess beatitude ; but since it hath pleased God, who chooseth the weak things of the world to confound the strong, to save by the folly of preaching those who believe, not so much is reason to be required as is the authority of the saints to be followed †.” An argument drawn from the same observation is used by Pelisson, in reasoning with the supporters of the pretended reform. “Having rejected the authority of the Catholic Church, each individual amongst them,” he remarks, “must examine not only the controversies of their time, but also all those which have ever been. Since this church has been so long deceived, they must begin to examine seriously whether they ought to be Arians, or Macedonians, or Nestorians, or Eutychians. These errors were embraced by very great men, full of genius and learning, and who had no wish to lose themselves. All heresies must be examined, for who knows which may not be right ? There were eighty

* Sir H. Davy, Dialog. ii. 101.

† Epist. cx.

in the time of St. Epiphanius; St. Augustin reckoned ninety. You cannot condemn them without a hearing. Therefore you must examine them all, one after the other; and to this study are bound alike the learned and the ignorant, by an equally indispensable obligation *."

"Certainty," says St. Thomas, "belongs both to science and faith; but there is this difference in the manner of their acquisition, that the certainty of faith is obtained by a divine light infused by God, and that the certainty of science is acquired by natural reason. However, as Rozevin observes, "Reason, whether individual or general, can never give us any thing but a human and natural certainty. One may have an entire and complete certainty of revelation, and believe in it, without having divine faith—that which is a gift of God, and which has all its certainty from God. Many enemies of religion have confessed, on their death-beds, that they never doubted of the truth which they had combated. They had not divine faith; and if they had received it in their infancy, their rebellious reason had rejected it, through the perversity of their will. They had lost faith, without having lost certainty; like the demons, who have a complete certainty of the mysteries of faith, but no faith †."

Faith is a divine virtue infused, so that one act contrary suffices to destroy it; therefore it is impossible to deny one article of faith, and continue to have a divine faith in any other. "Man," saith St. Thomas, "has received two sorts of good in his interior: the one appertains to human nature, and thus the natural law is engraven in him. This is his natural state. The other are added to the first by the gift of grace, and thus the new law is engraven in man, not only indicating to him what he ought to do, but also assisting him to do it †;" and this is his supernatural state.

The philosophers of the middle ages remark, that even in the former he cannot dispense with faith. "Human faith," says Melchior Canus, "is the way ordained by God, by which man is first brought to the use of reason, and the whole order and duration of human life depends upon it; so that they who would take away human faith

* *Réflexions sur les Différends de la Religion*, viii.

† Chap. ix.

‡ I. 2. q. 106. art. 1 ad 2.

from the minds of men are not only senseless, but, after the manner of the giants, they make war against the gods; that is, they contend with nature *.” But to the latter state faith is the first and only way of access. “It was necessary,” says Richard of St. Victor, “that nature, which fell by believing, should rise again by believing; it fell by believing the serpent—it rises again by believing in the Redeemer, that what it lost by faith it may recover by faith †.” “He who wishes to believe nothing,” says St. Anselm, “unless with reason and understanding preceding, confounds the thing, and, wishing to know all things, believing nothing, annihilates the faith which is in him. But whoever approaches God must believe that he is, saith the Scripture; and the just liveth by faith ‡.” Christ says, “He who believeth not is condemned.” “This certainly is evident,” adds the author of *Theologia Germanica*; “for man, who comes into this life, has no knowledge, nor can he come to knowledge, unless he first believes; and he who wishes to know before he believes, never comes to true knowledge §.” Here the schoolmen observed, that the vision of God by faith in general is the exclusive privilege of men whose hearts are clean; since the acquisition or retention of faith presupposed a good will. St. Thomas shows that there “concurs to faith an intellectual habit, by which man is disposed to obey a will tending to divine truth; for the understanding assents to the truth of faith, not as if convinced by reason, but as if commanded by the will. ‘Nullus enim credit nisi volens,’ as Augustin saith ||.” Duns Scotus also shows that there must be a certain habit infused into the will, in order that there should be faith in the intelligence; “for the intelligence,” he says, “is not moved unless by two things co-operating—the object and the will; and the credible is not so efficacious that it should move the intelligence itself to assent; so that, to the end that the intelligence should assent, it is necessary that it should be moved by the will; but it cannot be moved by the will to assent to any thing supernatural, unless in the will there should be a certain

* Melch. Can. de Locis Theologicis, lib. xi. cap. 4.

† Ric. S. Vict. de Incarnatione Verbi, lib. i. c. 9.

‡ S. Anselmi de Sacram. Alt. p. ii. cap. 2.

§ Cap. xlvi. || Q. cxi. art. 1.

habit supernaturally inclining to that volition. As, therefore, a supernatural habit of assent is requisite in the intelligence; so also is it necessary in the will that it should wish to assent*.” “Therefore,” concludes Henry of Ghent, “the beginning of faith requires an especial illumination, which, however, is offered to all men by God †.”

The principle of divine faith was neither in the general nor in the individual reason; for that would be giving a human foundation to a divine faith. It is an infused virtue, received in baptism. Was it asked how? Such an inquirer would have been told, in reply, that he must first explain how children come to discern between the noun and the verb, the substantive and the adjective, which neither they nor we can tell, so profound and hidden is the process. In the same manner, according to the remark of Bossuet, do we learn the language of the church. A secret light conducts us in the one state, as in the other: there it is reason—here, faith. Reason develops itself by degrees, and so does faith infused in baptism. There must be motives to attach us to the authority of the church. God knows them, and we know them in general; but in what way he arranges them, and how he makes them perceptible to these innocent souls, is the secret of his Holy Spirit. But it is on this foundation that all is built. In course of time we know more distinctly why we believe. Scripture even will strengthen the bonds which attach us; but we must always come to the origin, that is, to believe on the authority of the church. By that one commences and continues to believe in the Scripture; for St. Augustin was already consummate in ecclesiastical science when he said, that “he would not believe the Gospel if the authority of the Catholic Church did not oblige him.”

In proportion as reason is unfolded, men may examine the motives of faith, not before they believe, or in order to believe, but while believing, and consequently without holding their faith in suspense, in the same manner as they can examine the motives on which the love and obedience of their parents are founded. So then God, as the author of nature, assists the infant mind by the way

* Duns Scot. lib. iii. sent. dist. xxv. q. 2.

† Hen. Gaud. tom. i. art. 1. q. 11. f. 8.

of authority to come to the knowledge of language, of natural things, and of certain metaphysical truths; and in like manner, as the author of grace, he assists it under the influence of the Catholic rule, in which it is born and nourished, to acquire habitual faith, which begins from obedience to parents and instructors as the intermediate organs, and ends in the judgment of the reason consenting to truths as having been revealed by God, which is the formal motive of its faith. Consequently the Christian is never for a moment abandoned by the God of mercy to a state of doubt and incertitude, but is always secure and well grounded in his confidence, because the motives of his faith, always supremely reasonable, are presented to his reason in proportion as it is capable of discerning them; so that, appreciating them when arrived at maturity, every one is able to say with St. Basil, "Although, in other respects, our life furnishes matter for which we should mourn, yet for this one thing I am bold enough to glory in the Lord, that I never had false opinions respecting God, nor had to change my judgment from perceiving a former error; but the doctrine which I received from childhood, respecting God and his blessed Mother, and then what I received from my grandmother Macrina, I have preserved in myself, increased with just additions; for as my reason grew mature, I did not take up one opinion after another, but what I once received from them I finished and brought to perfection *."

We see, then, what was the office of reason in relation to faith: it was to confirm the lessons imparted to the innocent soul in baptism; it was, also, under the interior action of divine grace, to lead adult infidels to the faith in Jesus Christ, who are to be drawn by natural reason, by the law and the prophets, and the apostolic preaching; and further, it was to guard Christians themselves from heresy and schism; for, to cite but one instance, the authority of the church is to be proved against two sorts of adversaries: the one know not, or reject, revelation and the existence of a church divinely established; the other admit the existence of revelation, and of a church of Jesus Christ; but they dispute only on the nature and qualities of this divine church. Against the first, theo-

* Epist. lxxix. ad Eustat. Sebast. Episcop.

logians prove the divinity of the Christian church by the prophecies, by miracles, by the holiness of its doctrine, by the multitude of martyrs, by the fact of the establishment of this church, and of its propagation; against the second, they prove the nature and qualities of the church by the marks contained in the symbol of Nice as being generally received by all Christians, and by the testimony of those very Scriptures whose authority is received by all.

This leads us at once to the solution of the question respecting the limits and encouragement given to the spirit of inquiry in ages of faith. The distinction between the philosophy of inquisition and that of demonstration will explain the difference in the language of the ancient Fathers respecting philosophy. Degerando says that some of them received and others rejected philosophy. This is an inaccuracy; for all the Fathers rejected the philosophy of inquisition, applied to religious and moral truth, and all embraced that of demonstration, which was to demonstrate, explain, and illustrate truth already known.

Melchior Canus, showing the importance of the study of philosophy in the ecclesiastical school, appeals to the example of its early doctors, Dydimus, Justin, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Gregory Nyssen, Damascenus, and Augustin*: but philosophy in the church played the part only of a servant. Jesus Christ left no other philosophy to it but the Gospel, instituted no other school but that to which one enters by baptism, threw no other light on the question of certainty than by purifying the heart of man by the almighty power of divine grace. But if the philosophy of inquisition was thus excluded from the sphere of religious truth, that of demonstration and developement was judged useful, and adopted by the church. For such purpose she did not reject the service even of the Gentile philosophy. "Unlike," says Lacordaire, "that proconsul who feared the shade of Marius seated on the broken walls of Carthage, she did not drive from the ruins of the world the humiliated wrecks of human wisdom. She respected the reason of man in his fall, and held out to him, to the bottom of the abyss, a hand worthy of eternal love." The ancient learning

* De Locis Theologicis, lib. x.

was cultivated by her doctors with such care, that St. Jerome says "they imbued their books with so many of the sentences of the philosophers, that you would not know what you ought to admire most in them, their secular erudition or their knowledge of the Scriptures *." The defence of natural truths by natural arguments, and of revealed truths by divine arguments, was the philosophy of ages of faith. With Christians, the philosophy of inquisition, within the latter sphere, was rejected not only as vain and unprofitable, but also as utterly inconsistent with the Christian profession, and moreover subversive of the very idea of faith according to the doctrine of all antiquity †; for as the Master of the Sentences saith, following St. Gregory, "*Fides non habet meritum, ubi humana ratio præbet experimentum ‡.*"

There are in fact two orders of intelligence amongst men, that which submits to authority in relation to God, as man was appointed in the state of innocence, and that which inquires and judges for itself, like Adam in his fall: the one prompts them to say with the Jews, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" the other to reply with St. Peter, "Whither should we go?" Ask the modern teacher what he holds, because he has received it? No, it is because he has examined for himself, and resolved to hold it. He speaks of himself, though the Holy Ghost speaks not of himself; but what things he has received, those he speaketh. Christians, besides, had no occasion for applying to philosophy to discover truths already known, defined, and certain. In that respect, "to despise philosophy, was," as Paschal says, "truly to philosophize." The scholastic doctors, following the holy fathers, adhered strictly to the important maxim of the ancients, "*propriis argumentis pertractandam unamquamque rem esse.*" In theology they loved antiquity, as Paschal says, because they loved truth, and truth was in antiquity; but in matters of physical science they loved, or at least permitted, novelty, because knowledge was by experiment; and that they did so, is a fact which historical research will only confirm; for the story circulated by Kepler and others, of the deposition of Virgil from the see of Salzburg in the eighth century, by Pope

* Ad Mag.

† Vide Suarez de Fide.

‡ Pet. Lomb. lib. iv. dist. xi.

Zachary, for holding the existence of antipodes, is now admitted to be false *. And, whatever modern English biographers may say, we have already seen that it was not for attacking and refuting the Aristotelian dogmas respecting motion that Galileo suffered the persecution, which consisted in his being placed under some slight restrictions, first in the palace of Nicolini, the ambassador of his own sovereign, the Duke of Tuscany, and afterwards in the country seat of Archbishop Piccolomini, one of his own warmest friends ; but that the proceedings of the congregations against the new theory of the earth, which interfered not with the scientific question, arose from a pious though incautious solicitude to guard against the publication of an absolute contradiction to texts of Scripture, at a time when the public mind was not prepared for having the authenticity of Scripture made identical with an interpretation which was not literal. Their method of theology, however, was sufficient to account for the animosity with which the innovators of the sixteenth century waged war against them. "It was not," says Ventura, "the universals and categories which offended Luther, but the principles of the scholastic discipline ; for, though not very acute, he saw clearly enough that the faith of the world could not be overthrown until the experimental philosophy had been applied to morals, and the method of inquiry within the sphere of theology made to supersede that of demonstration. In vain did Melancthon remind him that this was to destroy not alone the Roman faith, but all the foundations of religious truth ; in vain, with all his strength, did he labour to maintain a 'reformed scholastic philosophy : ' the current was too strong for his feeble arms to stem it. Philosophy and religion were to be reformed thoroughly at the same time, by declaring that in both the one thing essential was inquiry and experiment. The combat between Nominalism and Realism, which had been going on from the time of Occam with a preponderance of the former, prepared the way for a complete separation between theology and philosophy, which had been maintained in perfect coalition till the end of the fourteenth century, while Realism reigned. The new division of the sciences, under an illustrious

* Whewell, *Hist. Induct. Science*, i. 256.

name, became general; and the ancient method in philosophy, so essentially wise and Christian, was abandoned to make way for the introduction of observation and experiment, as the fountains not alone of natural science, but of all knowledge.

“The successful results of our experiments and reasonings in natural philosophy,” says an illustrious philosopher of our time, “and the incalculable advantages which experience, systematically consulted and dispassionately reasoned on, has conferred in matters purely physical, tend of necessity to impress something of the well-weighed and progressive character of science on the more complicated conduct of our social and moral relations. It is thus that legislation and politics”—and he might certainly have added, religion—“became gradually regarded as experimental sciences, and history as the archive of experiments successful and unsuccessful, accumulating towards the solution of the grand problem.” I say he might have included religion in the list, for innovation in regard to it was pursued from the first, by men cherishing as a vital principle an unbounded spirit of inquiry and ardency of expectation. Accordingly the heathen style was once more revived. All books were now—“*Inquisitiones philosophicæ*,” or, “*de invenienda veritate*.” The prayers offered in the new temples besought God to grant them in this world the knowledge of his truth, as if a new and special revelation were to be expected, and as if truth had not been made visible to him that runs. Hence began to prevail a language respecting the toleration of all opinions, which alarmed those who rested their own on a human authority, who complained that “scarcely any man out of the bosom of the Romish church now dared to speak as if he were sure that he was right.” The complaint, indeed, argued great inconsistency; but the observation was just, for the general language, whatever one may choose to say of it, had unquestionably more resemblance to that of the heathen Academy than to the apostolic doctrine. “*Nos, qui sequemur probabilia, nec ultra quam id quod verisimile occurrerit, progredi possumus, et refellere sine pertinacia, et refelli sine iracundia parati sumus* *.” These words of Cicero are precisely similar to the lan-

* *Tuscul. ii. 2.*

guage of the most eminent writers who now came forward as Christians. Amiable and admirable may be the sentiment expressed; but nothing, also, can place in a stronger light the fact that it owes its virtue to a change of circumstances, and that the modern philosophy rests upon a totally different foundation from that which was laid by the apostles. Meanwhile a separation was made between philosophy and religion, though to both the one method was applied. The new masters began by saying, "We have now no need of authority; no regard is to be shown to councils or the testimony of the Fathers; but all things are to be examined and proved, and only what seems good to be held fast. Let us suppose, then, that as yet we know nothing, not even whether God exist or not, or what is the cause and end of things." "I remember," says an Italian philosopher, "when I first heard this language, as a pious youth, I was seized with astonishment, and I said to myself, 'If these things are already known, what need of searching farther? Is reason to be preferred to faith?—the words of a professor to my catechism?'" It was easy to anticipate what would be the result of such discipline. Obedience to faith was confounded with a foolish credulity and a false philosophic method. Rustics, workmen, servants, poor people, and women, were all looked upon as an unenlightened race—*mutum et turpe pecus*—no one cared for their opinions; while the proud inquirers, who believed themselves the arbiters and judges of all truth, who had rejected all authority and all external testimonies as vulgar prejudices, had after all done nothing but revive the pantheism, materialism, and scepticism of the Oriental and Greek philosophy; and indeed it was not a dissimilarity of positions and of facts which prevented men from hearing a voice from the cities and academies which were styled the centres of this modern light, like that of the ancients in days of their confusion, exclaiming, "Who does not admire the wisdom of the people that we call barbarians? Never did they call in question whether there was a Divine Power or not, or whether it did or did not take an interest in human affairs. No Indian, no Celt, no Egyptian, ever imagined a system like that of Evhemerus of Messena or Diogenes of Phrygia, of Hippo, of Diagoras, of Sosias, and Epicurus." Some, on the one hand, alarmed at the prospect of inter-

minable discussions and endless inquiry, and on the other opening their eyes to the fact that the great majority of mankind think not for themselves, tried to establish an authority in place of that which was overthrown. They seemed desirous of retaining the dignity of a name, when they had departed from the thing. Calvin himself mutilated his own book, and changed many parts of it when he began to govern. So, after renouncing all regard to what the Fathers had decided in holy councils, these men adopted, instead of canons possessing a real authority where reason was heard, that which might be denominated a Greek invocation to call fools into a circle. They made themselves a fearful monument!—the wreck of old convictions, things transmitted from saintly ancestors, maimed rites disfigured and abused. But it was soon evident that confusion's cure lives not in these confusions. Their motive was plain enough : all they sought was a return to something like stability—like common sense. Hence Europe beheld some kings and queens who, as Malebranche remarked, had more power over the spiritual than over the temporal affairs of their subjects, though the advocates of this system at the present day seem to say that its head could not have exercised his functions unless he were despotic even in the latter ; for these unhappy nations, caring less to preserve their faith than their earthly treasures, easily entered into the views of their princes, provided they were not contrary to their temporal interests." But, inconsistent as our nature is, such an authority was like sand to stem a torrent ; the human intelligence could not be bound by it ; and, in fact, as a modern writer observes, " it is more honourable to the head as well as to the heart to be misled by over eagerness in the pursuit of truth, than to be safe from blundering by contempt of it." In our days this mound, the work of King, Lords, and Commons, has given way on all sides, as its warmest well-wishers acknowledge ; confessing with Knox, in his late work, that unbounded liberty has become, even with those who are appointed to keep it in repair, a second nature. They say true ; and many, therefore, seem to think that " vast confusion waits, as doth a raven on a sick-fallen beast, the imminent decay of wrested pomp." The real inquirers had, indeed from the first, gone on as in Pagan times, verifying the remark of Cicero, that some proverbs of

the people are more true than the dogmas of some philosophers*; and often justifying his indignant exclamation, “*Hæc non turpe est, dubitare philosophos quæ ne rustici quidem dubitent †?*”

As the Pythagoreans thought to set out from numbers, the Socratics from ignorance, the Platonists from innate ideas, the Aristotelians from experiment; so among the moderns, Leibnitz places the foundation in dogmas, Spinoza in absolute identity, Berkeley in interior reflection, Locke in sensation and reflection, Kant in criticism or pure reason, Fitscher in mysticism, Stewart in sincretism, Degerando in a certain new empiricism. As soon as one philosopher lays a foundation, another comes and undermines his structure. One requires that you prove experience to be valid, another that you prove evidence, another desires you to prove the possibility of any knowledge whatever. Every time that a philosopher believes he has placed a deeper base than his predecessors, there immediately comes a thinker who sinks deeper still, and places a new doubt on this base: so that, as Tertullian says, “*Plus diversitatis invenies inter philosophos quam societatis ‡.*” It is therefore again as at Athens, when, as St. Augustin says, “disciples of the same Socrates would dispute about the first principles of philosophy, all being divided, no two thinking alike, no not respecting lands, or houses, or money affairs, or the things which make men live miserably or well. Not in vain,” he adds, “such a state was called the mystic Babylon, for the word Babylon means confusion, §” a reading which should be pressed upon the attention of the next expositor of the Apocalypse, who shall interpret it as Rome—that source of order for the world.

What line of argument then did they take who wished to represent this mystic Babylon as the Church of Jesus Christ? Truly they revived an old error, and asserted that the unity of faith meant a unity in the right of individual dissent. These therefore, without evincing despair, maintained that it was unphilosophical to seek certainty excepting in the sciences, and ridiculed Duns Scotus for saying that “As the end of the journey is intended by him who walks, so the exclusion of doubt

* De Finibus, ii. 31.

† De Officiis, iii. 19.

‡ De Anima.

§ De Civ. Dei, xviii. 41.

is the end intended by every one who speculates respecting truth * :” others on the contrary revived the notion of the ancients, saying that all which seems is true, whom St. Thomas had already confuted, remarking “that to suppose all judgments true would be as absurd as to affirm that if one, whose taste was sound, should judge honey to be sweet, he would judge truly; and in like manner if another, whose taste was infected, should judge it to be bitter, he too would judge truly; whence it would follow that all opinions were equally true †,” an error disclaimed even by Gentiles, as by Cicero, saying of the various opinions of philosophers, “*Quorum opiniones cum tam variæ sint, tamque inter se dissidentes; alterum fieri profecto potest, ut earum nulla; alterum certe non potest, ut plus una vera sit ‡.*”

What is still more deplorable, the multitude were, in the mean while, left as much unprovided with any true ground of certainty as the investigators themselves. Some took refuge in the persuasion that alleged grace may give certainty, which put an end at once to reasoning, for the most imbecile and ignorant reader, after violating all the natural rules of good sense, may laugh at us when we are unable to comprehend what he believes or wishes to believe. “It is that I have grace and you have not,” he will reply, which is certainly a very short way to sustain all errors; but such a principle, wretched as it was, could only deceive a small number: the multitude could never adopt it as the basis of their certainty. The spirit of confusion and giddiness which possessed men, when first these opinions became general, is a matter of history: no one knew what to hold or maintain. The palatinate changed its religion five times in the course of one century §. All indeed were of opinion that their particular view was certain and clear; but, as Pelisson remarks, “a doctrine could not be very plain when two men of great talents and knowledge, both, as they tell us, ‘raised up by God to reestablish the state of the Church,’ both taking the Scriptures for their rule of faith, came to a contrary conclusion respecting it,

* Duns Scot. *Metaph. lib. iii. c. 1.*

† *P. i. q. lxxxv. art. 2.*

‡ *De Nat. Deorum, lib. i. c. 2.*

§ Jerusalem and Babel.

when their followers too, all enlightened philosophic men, all likewise raised up by God to continue the great work of reestablishing the state of the Church, have not been able to agree together for three hundred years." The people therefore, thrown upon a wide sea of doubt, and driven hither and thither by every wind of novel doctrine, presented a strange and fearful spectacle, that might well have awakened salutary thoughts in erring breasts, for how could such a result be reconciled with the fact of the Christian revelation? The world had been for a long time divided between two religions, the Pagan and the Judaic—the one a religion of uncertainty, the other one of certainty: a probability was all that any one could hope to discern under the first, for the wisest of the Greeks could only be said by his disciple to have chosen a manner of debate most likely to discover to him what was nearest or most like to truth—"quid veri simillimum esset *;" while the latter, receiving all moral truths from divine tradition, had no occasion to seek elsewhere, among the opinions of men, for what they already possessed. The Messiah came who was to perfect this latter: every thing was finished, every thing established. By what terrible and unaccountable adventure, or by what sudden change of the divine will, did he suffer men to fall back again into that region of uncertainty from which he had drawn them?

We have seen, in general, what part was allotted to philosophy in ages of faith, with regard to religion and moral truths. The holy Fathers and the scholastic doctors received philosophy in this sphere, as the humble attendant upon theology, and as only concerned with declaring, developing, explaining, and demonstrating the truth already known. It constituted the scientific knowledge of what, without it, was simply known. The simple knowledge of duty and truth belonged to all, but the science of these to only a few, and scholastic philosophy was nothing else but the scientific knowledge of those things which, otherwise, were known simply by every one.

The scholastic wisdom was faith combined with criticism, ascetic piety with the most accurate judgment, formed upon psychological observations. "Thine

* Tuscul. i. 4.

eye," says Hugo of St. Victor, "can see nothing well unless it see itself*." "One thing is faith," he says elsewhere, "and another is the knowledge of faith: the knowledge of faith can exist without faith, and many believe without having the knowledge of all the things which they believe; but they know those who have that knowledge, and by adhering to the perfect they are saved. — Boves arabant, et asinæ pascebantur juxta eos†." Here then we see the great use of the scholastic method, why it is so precious to the church and so formidable to its adversaries. "In a word," says Berthier, "it serves to fix the sense of revelation, and to unravel the artificial language of an innovator. In itself, scholastic theology, or philosophy, is nothing but the doctrine of Scripture and tradition, treated according to dialectic method. The method is only the instrument accessory, the doctrine is the foundation and the substance‡," so that a St. Thomas did not differ from a simple disciple of the Christian faith, in that he had discovered more truths, or in that he held them with a firmer assent, for the same faith belonged to all, and the same motive, the authority of God speaking by the Church, and therefore with the same firmness and alacrity every intelligence was alike captivated to the obedience of faith, but the difference consisted in this only, that as the simple disciples knew and held truths revealed by God, the scholastic had learned to perceive the causes and reasons of the doctrines, and was able to demonstrate their origin and to overthrow the objections of heretics§. This apparent limitation was however in reality an extension of the powers of philosophy, for "authority," as St. Augustin says in his treatise on true religion, "requires docility, and conducts man to reason;" and as Bonald says, "so far from man discovering truth by the sole force of his reason, he has not reason until he has known truth||." St. Augustin speaks elsewhere still more explicitly: "although man," saith he, "cannot

* De Arrha Animæ.

† Hug. S. Vict. Eruditionis Theolog. lib. i. tit. 18.

‡ Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles xii. xiii. xiv. xv. Hist. de l'Eglise. xiv.

§ Ventura de Methodo Philosophandi, cap. ii. a. 1.

|| Legislation prim. i. 354.

believe in God if he does not comprehend something, nevertheless this same faith, by which he believes, gives him strength to comprehend more truths; for there are some things which we do not believe before comprehending them, and there are others which we do not comprehend before we believe in them."

This philosophy of demonstration or developement was not only permitted, but promoted with every possible encouragement during the ages of faith, so that nothing but the unavoidable interruption, arising from wars and the invasions of barbarians, caused it any impediment. It constituted, in fact, the study and employment of learned Christians in all ages. Though the actual finding of truth is only effected by the Son of God, yet philosophy, as Clemens Alexandrinus says, was considered one of the means which conduce to its attainment*.

St. Augustin writes to Consentius, desiring that "those things which he holds with the firmness of faith, he may be able also to behold with the light of reason." "Forbid it," he says, "that God should hate in us that which renders us more excellent than other animals." "Forbid it," I say, "that we should believe, in order that we should not accept reason, or enquire, when we could not even believe unless we had rational souls." To shew, therefore, that right reason is never in opposition with revealed truth, is the grand object of St. Thomas, in his admirable work against the Gentiles—"The things," saith he, "which are naturally imprinted in reason, are so manifestly true, that it is impossible to suppose them false; and what is held by faith, is so evidently confirmed by the testimony of God, that it is not allowable to believe it false. Since then, falsehood alone is contrary to truth, it is impossible that the truth of faith should be contrary to the principles which reason naturally acknowledges†." Hence the *Summa Sententiarum* of Hugo of St. Victor, begins with the words of St. Peter: "We ought to be ready to give to every one that asks a reason of the faith and hope which is in us." Pregnant words, to which must be ascribed the whole scholastic philosophy.

* *Stromat. lib. i. c. 20.*

† *S. Thom. cont. Gentes, lib. i. c. 7.*

St. Anselm shews the importance which was attached to such studies in his time, and his words are very remarkable, as showing what clear and accurate notions were then generally entertained, with regard to the method of philosophy. "I am often desired by many," he says, "to commit to writing the reasons which I am accustomed to render concerning our faith to persons who enquire respecting it; for they say that these reasons please and satisfy them, which they desire, not that by reason they should approach to faith, but that they may be delighted with the contemplation of these things, which they believe, with their intelligence, and also in order that they may be always prepared to give a reason to every one who asks of the hope which is in us*." He then lays down the rule in these terms, "as the right order requires that we should believe the profound things of the Christian faith, before we presume to discuss them by reason; so it would seem to me negligence, if after we are confirmed in the faith, we should not study to understand what we believe. Therefore," he continues, "since I see your importunity, I will endeavour, by God's assistance, and the aid of your prayers, not so much to show what you seek, as to inquire with you concerning it." On further interrogation, he makes the disputant say, "this I ask, not that you should confirm me in faith, but that me, who am confirmed, you should make joyful, by the understanding of that truth†." Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect—"We should endeavour," he says, "always, as far as is lawful or possible to comprehend by reason what we hold by faith‡;" and again, says he, elsewhere, "if we do not believe we cannot understand; knowledge must enter by faith; it must not indeed rest in the entrance, but always it should hasten on to interior and profound things, and by every study and diligence provide that we may be able to advance daily in the understanding of these things, which we hold by faith; these are the best riches, these are eternal delights§." Similarly speaks Henry of Ghent, quoting St. Augustin, "*ita enim jam*

* *Cur Deus Homo*, lib. i. c. 1.

† *C.* 2. c. 15.

‡ *Ric. S. Vict. Allegoriæ Taber fœd.*

§ *Id. de Trinitate*, p. i. lib. i. c. 3.

sum affectus, ut quod sit verum non credere solum, sed etiam intelligendo apprehendere desiderem." In this sense, therefore, it is evident that the scholastic philosophers would have readily assented to the sentence of Lord Bacon, that "the use of human reason in religion extendeth to the mysteries themselves. But how? By way of illustration and not by way of argument." Not even the boldest logician, who carried natural argument the farthest in theology, attempted to justify their employment of reason, on any other grounds. The friends of Abailard took care to show that it was from his having to refute the heretical opinions of Roscellin, who appealed to reason and philosophy, that he was obliged in his reply to have recourse to the same authorities, and that when he was censured by some for so doing, he had excused himself by citing the example of St. Jerome and other Fathers, and by observing that not only a theologian, but a simple Christian, was obliged to give a reason for his faith, and to convince pagans, Jews, and heretics, that we hold nothing contrary to good sense and reason, and that for this purpose the thoughts of the ancient philosophers might be brought forward with great utility*.

"The great ascetic teachers themselves conformed to this discipline:" Wadding remarks, "that St. Bonaventura always employed philosophy and human sciences to defend the dogmas of the Catholic faith †." Who more opposed to the philosophy of the world, than the Friar Savonarola, and yet in his work on the Triumph of the Cross, he shews, by the light of reason, that there is nothing contrary to reason in the faith of the Catholic church—that her belief concerning sanctification is not irrational—that her judicial doctrine is not irrational—that the institution of seven sacraments is not irrational—that the doctrine of the Eucharist in particular is not irrational—that the rites connected with the sacraments are not irrational—that the ceremonies of the Church generally are not irrational ‡. And the principle of his work he explains, saying, "that they are to be especially commended, who having first embraced faith

* Vie d'Abeill. lib. 11.

† Ann. Min. tom. iv. 143.

‡ Savanarol. Triumph. Crucis, sive de Veritate Fidei, lib. iii. 8.

by the divine inspiration, afterwards endeavour to confirm others in it, by adducing reasons of this faith and hope according to the exhortation of Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and of our Lord Christ."

Such being then the object and method of philosophy, during these ages, it is obvious that the human reason so far from being confined and clogged by the Christian discipline, was delivered by it from innumerable obstacles, and left free to exercise itself over an immeasurable range of subjects, comprising every thing which could yield the mind of man utility or satisfaction.

The objects of the Fathers' philosophy are God, the relation of God to the world, and of men to God. In treating on the first, it was shewn that there is a three-fold knowledge of God, through the image, resemblance, or representation of God—through external nature, and through revelation. Examples of the physico-theological cosmology, to be found in the Fathers, occur in St. Gregory Nazianzen's twenty-fourth Oration, and in the Treatise on the Orthodox Faith, by St. John Damascenus *. In the works of St. Augustin are found arguments from Ontology †, and from Ethics ‡. The relation of God to the world was shewn in the history of the Creation, which was advanced against Manichæans and Gnostics by St. Augustin and St. Athanasius. In the eternal foreknowledge of God §, proof was found to refute the astrological and Stoic fate ||; and the omniscience of God was shewn to be reconcilable with human freedom. The origin of evil was placed in man's freedom and the power of wicked spirits ¶. Man was considered in relation to body, soul, and spirit, by St. Justin and the early Fathers; the soul, however, was shewn to be spiritual by Nemesisius, Augustin **, and by Claudius Mameertinus of Vienne ††: immortality was ascribed to it either essentially, as by St. Augustin, or as a free gift of God, as by St. Justin and Arnobius. Of Ethics, or the relation of men to God, the foundation is shown to be the divine will, subjective or objective, and from the side

* Lib. i. 3.

† De Lib. Arbitrio, lib. ii. 5. 15.

‡ De Trin. lib. viii. 3.

§ Lactant. de Ira Dei.

|| August. de Civ. D. v. 9. ¶ Tertul. August. Origen. S. J. Damas.

** De Quantitate Animæ, c. 1. †† De Statu Animæ, iii.

of men, obedience. The knowledge of duty is from revelation, and its motives are the fear of God's power *, the hope of salvation †, and the disinterested or mystic love of the highest good, according to St. Augustin, whom Tenneman styles the greatest thinker of the Latin Fathers, who desired to unite in one living spirit mysticism and dialectics.

The scholastic philosophy is supposed to have commenced in the Palatine schools, founded by Charlemagne, in which, according to the system of Marcius Capella, Cassiodorus, and Bede, were taught the seven liberal arts, the division of which Hugo de St. Victor says, is traced to Pythagoras ‡; and between which he says "there is such a coherence that where one is wanting the others cannot make a philosopher§." Grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics, formed the trivium; geometry, arithmetic, astrology, and music, the quadrivium. In the Palatine, as well as in the monastic schools, and subsequently in the universities, were taught theology and philosophy, with great zeal and perseverance, and as Tenneman says, "an intense interest for the perfection of the intelligence and of the attainment of knowledge in union with faith ||." The rules given for the conduct of instruction and the practice of the schools, confirm all these statements respecting the method of philosophy in the middle ages.

"Philosophic teaching," as Alanus de Insulis defines preaching, "was an instruction to form men by the rule of reason, emanating from the fountain of authority. This ought to be its form," adds the universal Doctor, "that it should take its beginning from theological

* Tertull. de Pœnit. 4.

† Lactant. lib. iii. c. 2.

‡ Eruditionis Didasc. lib. iii. 3.

§ Id. lib. iii. c. 5.

|| In General see Cæs. Bulæi Hist. Universitat. Paris. vol. vi. Crevier, Hist. de l'Universit. Paris, vol. vii. Launojus de Cebrioribus Scholis, and de Varia Aristot. Fortuna in Acad. Paris. Thomasius de Doctoribus Scholasticis. Melchior Canus. Fabricii Bibl. Lat. Mediæ et Inf. Ætatis. Tiedemann's Gesch. der Speculat. Philosophie, iv. v. Buhle's Lehrb. des Gesch. der Philos. viii. ix. Tenneman's Gesch. der Philos. viii. ix. Frhr. von Eberstein Natürliche Theologie der Scholastiker Leipz. 1803. Cuvier, Hist. de la Philosophie.

authority, as from its proper foundation, from the Gospels, Psalms, and Epistles of Paul; but occasionally may be inserted the sayings of the Gentiles, and the authority of the philosophers *.” The great scholastics of the middle age taught in the ancient manner, as described by St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, who had been a disciple of Origen; he used to begin, we are told, with the praises of philosophy, that is of true wisdom, which consisted in the knowledge of one’s self, and of the end for which one came into the world. He then censured the ignorance and blindness of those who were indifferent to instruction, and shewed that philosophy was necessary to the attainment of true piety. In proceeding without any air of disputation, he used to testify a goodness and affection, as a man who sought not to conquer them in argument, but to save them and to communicate to them real good. He was not content with giving superficial instructions; he used to dig deep and penetrate into their minds, interrogating, and then replying to them in the Socratic manner. After having prepared and excited them to receive instruction, he used to begin with teaching the use of a solid logic; he next directed them to physical science, to mathematics, geometry, and astronomy, which would lead them to consider the power and wisdom of the Creator; and, lastly, to ethics, which he treated not in a dry abstract manner, but by examples, and causing them to make observations upon their own internal movements. After these studies he led them to theology, as the most necessary, and caused them to read all that had been written by the ancients, whether Greeks or barbarians, in order that they might know the strong and the weak side of all opinions, and learn what utility could be drawn from each sect; but he exhorted them to attach themselves to no one philosopher, but to God alone, and to his prophets: he then explained the Holy Scriptures, of which he was the most learned interpreter of the time.” At the mere announcement of the parts of such high discourse, methinks, reader, I can read contentment in thy looks; but what follows next will please thee more. For from this point we proceed to shew that the philosophy of the clean of heart was exempt from the

* *Alani de Insulis summa de Arte Prædicatoria*, cap. 1.

evils of the tree whereof Eve tasted ; that its spirit was humble, its tendency practical and living, its expression clear, not with confusion mixed, its form beauteous, so as to warm the imagination with poetic flame, while the intelligence found what was solid and exact. Finally, we shall observe, that it was Catholic, and endued with virtue to awake and strengthen all generous and noble affections. To what I now disclose, be thy clear ken directed ; and thou plainly shalt behold who were the guides that could conduct the world to its true light, and to the vision which is the recompense of faith.

CHAPTER X.

“*ERITIS sicut Dii*,” were the Serpent’s words in Paradise, which caused the rational creature to fall from its happy state ; and the secret voice in the wilderness of this lower world, which continues to entail misery on the human race, is but their echo. “You shall be as gods,” and men believe the promise. Homer, if we admit the opinion of Cicero, seems to have discerned this fact in speaking of the song of the Syrens ; for it was not by the novelty or variety of their music, that they were accustomed to draw back those, who were sailing by ; but it was their professing to know many things that caused men to adhere to their rocks, by the desire of knowledge ; for thus they invite Ulysses :

Δεῦρ’ ἄγ’ ἰὼν, πολύαιν’ Ὀδυσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,
 Νῆα κατάστησον, ἵνα νωϊτέρην ὅπ’ ἀκούσῃς.
 Οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῇδε παρήλασε νηϊ μελαίνῃ,
 Πρὶν γ’ ἡμέων μελίγηρυν ἀπὸ στομάτων ὅπ’ ἀκοῦσαι·
 Ἄλλ’ ὅγε τερψάμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς.
 Ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ’ ὅσ’ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὖρεϊν
 Ἀργεῖοι, Τρῳῆς τε, θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν·
 Ἴδμεν δ’ ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πολυβοτείρῃ.*

“Homer saw,” says the philosopher, “that the fable could not be credible, if such a man were retained by

* Od. M. 184.

some little songs ; they promised knowledge *.” How profoundly the clean of heart, in ages of faith, had estimated the danger, may be witnessed in all their writings, which had relation to philosophy. “All heretics in general,” says St. Augustin, “deceive by the promise of science, and condemn those whom they find simply believing †.” “From consulting the Holy Scriptures,” he says, “it appears that the demons have been so named, on account of their science ; the demons have science, but without charity, and, hence they are puffed up with monstrous pride. ‡.” This is all that they can give thee, Christians, now in the garden of the Church ; now once more happy as in Paradise, if ye seek no happier state, and know to know no more.

“It is a great height of science,” says Richard of St. Victor, “perfectly to know oneself. A great and lofty mountain is the full knowledge of the rational spirit ; that mountain surpasses the summit of all worldly sciences, and from aloft looks down upon all philosophy. What found Aristotle, or Plato, and what did the crowd of philosophers find ? Truly, and without doubt, if they had ascended this mountain to find themselves, the study would have been sufficient for them §.” It was for this end that Pope Innocent III. wrote his Treatise on the Contempt of the World, and the Misery of the Human Condition ; for hear what he says himself, “ad deprimendam superbiam, quæ caput est omnium vitiorum, vilitatem humanæ conditionis utcunque descripsi ||.” The philosophic writings of the middle ages were not calculated to infuse men with self and vain conceit, as if the flesh which walled about their life were brass impregnable. The universal Doctor seasons his instructions to the student by desiring him to remember death :

Illicitos, miserande puer, compesce furores,
Scito quod ad mortem commovet hostis eos.

* De Finibus Bonor. et Mal. lib. v. 18.

† Lib. ii. de Gen. contra Manich. 25.

‡ Id. de Civit. Dei, lib. ix. 20.

§ Ric. S. Vict. de Præparatione Animi ad Contemplationem, cap. 75.

|| Cap. iii.

Aufer ab his mentem, miserosque videto dolores,
 Altera plus istis sunt meditanda tibi.
 Esto memor quod pulvis eris, et vermibus esca,
 In gelida putris quando jacebis humo.
 Non erit in Mundo qui te velit ultra videre,
 Cum tua rancidior fit cane rupta caro.
 Heu ! cur gaudet homo, cur ille superbit ; et ad
 Cur ducit fastus, qui cinis est, et erit ?

“O man,” he exclaims, in his summary of the preacher’s art, “Behold thyself in the triple mirror, and thou wilt renounce pride ; there is a triple mirror in which thou shouldest behold thyself—the mirror of Scripture—the mirror of nature—the mirror of the creatures. In the first, thou wilt read thy condition—in the second, thou wilt see thy misery—in the third, thou wilt consider thy guilt*.” How well he had applied this to himself, can be witnessed in his Penitential, which begins with the words of Jeremiah, “A A A Domine Deus quoniam puer ego sum, et nescio loqui,” on which he thus comments :—If Jeremiah, sanctified from the womb, chosen a prophet by the Lord, and taught by divine inspiration, feared to assume the office of a preacher, and confessed himself a child and a stutterer, how shall we presume to undertake the sacerdotal functions ? If poverty should impel us to orders, the necessity of the Church bind us, the authority of superiors oblige us, we cry A. Any insult of poverty we would sustain rather than undertake with peril the burden of the priesthood ; yet, if necessity should exist, if the authority of superiors should reasonably enjoin us, we prepare ourselves with corresponding manners, and reputing ourselves unworthy, exclaim with Jeremiah, “A A A Domine Deus†.”

If we look to the philosophic writings of the ages of faith, we shall soon perceive that the schoolmen, as well as the ascetic theologians, were, like St. Bernard, humble from a profound estimate of themselves, and of their own worthlessness, and from a wish to be humbled by that knowledge. In the first place this spirit is remarkably developed in all passages which relate to the proper limits for the exercise of the human intelligence.

* Sum. de Arte Præd. cap. iii.

† Alani de Insulis liber Pœnitentialis.

St. Gregory teaches us, that "whatever we say of God is unworthy of God, inasmuch as it is we who say it, and because of the manner in which we say it. According to Dionysius, the school taught that God is neither a being, nor a substance, nor a life, nor an intelligence, nor goodness, nor wisdom, nor power, nor beauty, if we consider the said perfections, as they are apprehended by us, or expressed in our language; for as St. Thomas says, "all our conceits and words, of what kind soever, bring imperfection with them, either of part, if they be abstract, or of composition, if they be concrete; consequently they are always incomplete and inadequate." Many flip-pant objections, of modern infidels, founded on their notions of God's attributes, could therefore have found no listener in the schools. "Whom from all, and above all, I seek, love, and desire," says Albert the Great, "is not sensible or imaginable; but above all that is sensible and intelligible*." And Duns Scotus observes, "Infinitum in quantum infinitum est ignotum†."

Let us observe how this spirit came into action in the schools. "He who asks," says Peter Lombard, "why did God wish to make the world, asks the cause of the will of God; but all efficient Cause is greater than that which is effected; and nothing is greater than the will of God, therefore its cause must not be sought for." St. Augustin says, "if his will had a cause, there would then be something antecedent to his will, which it would be impious to assert. If God foresaw the number that would be lost, then is God not good? Well, perhaps, not. What have you then to do but to tremble at his power? What, are you, miserable creature, surrounded by the evidence of his existence, to criticise his actions? The fear of God is then the beginning of wisdom: God could make them have a good will. Why does he not? Quia noluit. Cur noluit? Ipse novit. I can seek no farther cause than his will‡. Thus we see how faithful to the teachers of the school was the great poet of the ages of faith, who, to the question, how can this be just? would answer—

"O animals of clay! O spirits gross!
The primal will, that in itself is good,

* De adhærendo Deo, c. 7. † Duns Scot. Physica, text 35.

‡ Dist. xlv. lib. 1.

Hath from itself, the chief good, ne'er been mov'd ;
 Justice consists in consonance with it,
 Derivable by no created good,
 Whose very cause depends upon its beam *."

"In talibus magis recurrendum est ad orationis suffragium quam ad ingenium rationis," says Pope Innocent III. of the mysteries of faith, the annunciations of which were to their intelligence as the columns of Hercules.

————— τὸ πόρσω
 δ' ἔστι σοφοῖς ἄβατον
 κάσόφοις †.

To all who sought to proceed farther, the school replied, with Dante, "so 'tis will'd where will and power are one: ask thou no more." "Let those who are not satisfied with such answers, seek men more learned than Augustin," but, adds St. Thomas, "let them beware lest they find more presumptuous †." St. Clement of Alexandria shews the similarity of the Christian and Socratic method, "for the knowledge of our ignorance," he says, "is the first fruit of instruction to him walking in truth. Being ignorant he will seek, and seeking he will find a master: finding he will believe him, and believing he will hope in him, and then by love will be made similar to him; this is the method which Socrates shewed to Alcibiades. Do you not think that I have knowledge of justice? Yes, if you find it. Do you not think I can find it? Yes, if you seek it. But, do you not think that I will seek it? Yes, if you think that you are ignorant §.

The Sophists, who, from time to time, rose up against the Catholic philosophy, were all sons of Porus, as Plato would say, but none of them had Penia for their mother; they were all full—they wanted no knowledge: whereas, the Catholic philosophers, like those whom he commended, were neither ignorant nor conscious of possessing complete knowledge, the sense of which imperfection made them long for wisdom; that is, made them philoso-

* Par. xix.

† Lib. de Spirit. et lit. c. 33.

‡ Pindar. Olymp. iii.

§ Strom. v. 3.

phers in the old original Greek sense ; for, as Frederick Schlegel remarks, the original followers of philosophy regarded it as being only what the word indicates—the highest desire of knowledge, and the intellectual effort after godly truth *.

“Some,” says Lactantius, “thought that they could know all things, which was of God ; others that they could know nothing, which was of cattle. Wisdom was in neither of these, “*est enim aliquid medium quod sit hominis, id est, sapientia cum ignoratione conjuncta atque temperata* †.” They who would observe how this was cultivated by Catholic philosophers, may consult Muratori’s admirable work, “*De Ingeniorum Moderatione in Religionis Negotio*.” There is a playful side to most things, by turning to which discourse may be enlivened. Stephen Pasquier cites an amusing passage from an old author, to shew with what mistrust men regarded the profession of more complete knowledge than belonged to the present condition of the human intelligence. “In the year 1445, there was,” saith he, “a young man of twenty in the university of Paris, who knew all the seven liberal arts, knew how to play on all instruments, how to sing, to paint, to illuminate books, better than any one else in all Paris ; in warlike matters no one more expert than he, and no better swordsman : he was master in arts, master in medicine, doctor in law, doctor in decretals, doctor in theology, and truly he disputed with us in the College of Navarre, who were more than fifty of the most perfect clerks of the university, and more than 3000 other clerks, and answered so high to all the questions, that it was a perfect wonder for any one to believe who had not seen it. Item, he spoke very subtle Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and many other tongues. Truly, if a man could live one hundred years without eating, drinking, or sleeping, he would not have learnt all that he knew by heart ; and, for a certainty, he puts us in great fear, for he knows more than human nature can know, and we have it in Scripture that Antichrist will feign himself a Christian.” This was not an exaggerated picture, for George Chastelain, in the time of Charles VII., speaks of the same youth,

* Philosophie der Sprache 226.

† De Falsa Sapientia.

J'ai veu par excellence
 Un jeune de vingt ans
 Avoir toute science,
 Et les degrez montant,
 Soy se vantant sçavoir dire
 Ce qu'onques fut escrit
 Par seule fois le lire
 Comme un jeune Antichrist.

But let us return to what is serious :

To maintain their pretensions to the character of teachers, "the scholastic philosophers did not," as Herschel says of the successors of the early Greek philosophy, "adopt the tone of men who had nothing further to learn." Speaking of the depth of Catholic wisdom, St. Augustin says, "*Cum consummaverit homo tunc incipit.*" Their style is, accordingly, that of Pope Innocent III., saying, "*Vellem doceri potius quam docere **." St. John Climachus concludes with a similar profession, in his letter to Abbot John Raychu, saying, "For we, also, are yet to be numbered in the class of disciples." Nevertheless, as Guido the Carmelite says of St. Augustin, "Although these men may speak humbly, they speak wisely, and truth is on their lips." It was the Catholic manner, as well as the Pythagorean, when asked nothing, to say nothing; and, indeed, the similarity between the two disciplines in this respect has often struck observers: as may be witnessed in the letter of Hermolaus Barbarus to Signino, in which he speaks of "the candid and well-constituted minds of which the highest property is never to teach, but always to wish to be taught, to hate judgment, and to love silence. In this," he remarks, "the whole discipline of the Pythagoreans consisted; and this is most intimately allied to that virtue which, under the name of humility, is so celebrated among Christians, which for every man is the most certain way to the glory of eternal salvation, and which to a man of letters is the necessary companion, without which we shall never be either docile in finding or prudent in judging;" for "*non potest non indoctus esse qui se doctum credit.*" Two of the most beautiful works of mystic philosophy in the middle ages were entitled by its author, Thomas à Kempis, *Hospitale Pauperum* and *Manuale Parvulorum*. St.

* *Myst. Missæ*, v. 2.

Clemens Alexandrinus denominates the Christian discipline the state of mystic youth. "In respect to truth," saith he, "we are all as children and youths before God; we are a youthful race, learning new good things; we are always in the flower of youth, flourishing without old age—*ἀεὶ νέοι καὶ ἀεὶ ἡπιοὶ καὶ ἀεὶ καινοί*. The never-decaying wisdom remains with us as our mother, we regard the Church as our mother*." Within her pale all who co-operated with the sacramental grace were born according to her paschal supplication, though by sex or by age differing, into one and the same infancy. But what a sweet and wondrous transformation was here implied! "This is the height of philosophy," says St. Chrysostom, "to be simple, with prudence: this is an angelic life; for the soul of a little boy is free from all diseases: it retains no memory of injuries; and although beaten by his mother, he always seeks her and prefers her before all others. If you would show a queen adorned with a diadem, he would not prefer her to his mother covered with tatters and rags: he esteems things not on account of poverty or riches, but from love; and therefore we are told, that of such is the kingdom of heaven†."

If, in short, we say with Novalis, that innocence and ignorance are sisters, which dwell in heaven and seek only the noblest and most tried men‡, we must conclude, from a review of the middle ages, that they found their true disciples in the Catholic schools. "Zachæus, make haste to come down, because this day I must lodge in thy house," was the admonition made to every one on first entering them; for such is the address of divine truth when about to visit the soul of man. Descend quickly from this height of proud science, that in a clean heart thou mayest receive and see thy God. Humility, however, was not confined to the limitation of the curiosity of man: it was employed also to guide him in the path which leads to true knowledge.

"The beginning of discipline," says Hugo of St. Victor, "is humility,—that we should hold no science, no writing vile—that we should not blush to learn from any

* Clem. Alex. Pæd. lib. i. c. 5, 6.

† S. Chrysostom. Hom. 62. in Matth.

‡ Schriften, ii. 291.

one; and that, having acquired science, we should not despise others. Many wish to seem wise before the time. I have known some who, while they were ignorant of the first elements, would not condescend to attend to any but the highest things, and thought that they could only become great if they read the writings or heard the words of the wisest men. 'We have seen them,' they say; 'we have read them; they have often spoken to us; these first and most celebrated men have known us.' Sed utinam me nemo cognoscat, et ego cuncta noverim. You boast to have seen, not to have understood, Plato; I deem it, then, unworthy of you to hear me. I am not Plato, nor have I deserved to see Plato. He may suffice to you. You have drunk from the fountain of philosophy, but I only wish that you might still thirst*."

Beautiful are their admonitions, to remind men that the life of faith is not that of glory, "in which alone," as St. Augustin says, "without any temptation of pride, they can adhere to the supreme good." "If you have not the wings of an eagle flying to the stars of heaven," says Thomas à Kempis, "you have those of the simple dove making her nest in the rocks, and daily meditating on the most holy wounds of Jesus. Humble Francis found more sweetness and delight in the passion of Christ, than the subtle astronomer in calculating the spaces of heaven †." "Let no one seek by human wisdom," says Richard of St. Victor, "those things which are above human intelligence ‡." We find even the poets, as Gui du Faur de Pibrac, commending the learned ignorance of their masters in philosophy, which could confound the arrogance of talkative sophists §, and later writers not much conversant with theology, like Montaigne, exclaiming, "O what a sweet, soft, wholesome pillow is ignorance and the absence of curiosity, to rest a head well made!"

It is evident that they were profoundly impressed with the sentiment thus in after-ages expressed by Milton, when he says, "How happy were it for this frail, and, as

* Hugo S. Vict. Erudit. Didascalicæ, lib. ii. c. 14.

† Sermonum iii. pars 9.

‡ Ric. S. Vict. de Eruditione Hominis Interioris, lib. i. l. 19.

§ Goujet, Bibliothèque Franc. tom. xii. 274.

it may be called, mortal life of man, since all earthly things which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use are withal so cumbersome and full of trouble, if knowledge, yet which is the best and lightsomest possession of the mind, were, as the common saying is, no burden, and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body it did not with a heavy advantage overlay upon the spirit! But he that hath obtained wisdom, remembering that he must improve the entrusted gifts of God, and finding in the discharge of his commission the greatest variance and offence, cries with the sad prophet Jeremiah, ‘Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me, a man of strife and contention!’ Nor was this hid from the wise poet Sophocles, who, in that place where Tiresias is called to resolve King Œdipus in a matter which he knew would be grievous, brings him in bemoaning his lot that he knew more than other men.”

Again, nothing clearly could be more opposed to the spirit of the scholastic philosophers, and also to the universal sentiment of men during ages of faith, than the Titanic genius of the modern school—that proud deification of man, where, like Prometheus, he sings his own glory. Men in general seemed to have shrunk from the idea of being able uniformly to overcome the difficulties arising from the laws of the Creator in the physical order of things, beyond his evident intentions and the obvious necessities of human life. Some works in later times are of a nature that would rather have shocked than interested their feelings. They would have been inclined, with somewhat of the old Greek feeling, to view them as an audacious Titanian effort of barbarian power, and to regard boastful speech with a kind of terror, from having retained so much of the same spirit as to be convinced, with Æschylus, that death in silence with dreadful rage pulverizes the high talkers:—

——— σιγῶν ὀλεθρος
καὶ μέγα φωνοῦντ’
ἔχθραῖς ὀργαῖς ἀμαθύνει*.

A passage from a Chronicle of the middle ages will

* Eumen.

illustrate their spirit in this respect. What it terms “the proud, vain, useless, blasphemous word” of King Alfonso the astrologer, that if God at the creation had consulted him he would have ordered some things better, filled the devout Spaniards with terror and indignation. “O how much wiser David, exclaims Roderic Santius, “who said, ‘*Mirabilia opera tua, Domine, et quis cognoscet nimis? Quam magnificata sunt opera tua, Domine. Omnia in sapientia fecisti.*’ A certain soldier, in a vision, beheld an angel, who announced that sentence was passed upon the king, and that he should lose his kingdom, and, unless he repented, die a cruel death. This soldier, in consequence, went boldly to the king, who was at Burgos, and told him his vision; but the king only laughed at him, and repeated the same blasphemy in answer, and then sent him from his presence. Soon after, being at Segovia, a certain hermit of most holy life had a similar vision, which moved him likewise to repair to the court, in order to warn and admonish Alfonso; but the king seemed only to be hardened the more, and the hermit was sent out of his presence with scorn. That night God sent such horrible and unusual tempests and whirlwinds, such thunder and lightning and sheets of flame, that it seemed as if heaven were about to fall, and the royal garments were consumed in the king’s room by the celestial fire. The king, astonished, and hardly able to speak through fear, ordered the chamberlain to send for the hermit; but so violent was the storm, that no one durst leave the palace. As soon as they could, however, they went in search of him, and introduced him to the king, who, falling down, said, ‘It is I who have sinned.’ The hermit then said to him, ‘O man, who hath placed wisdom in thy bowels? art thou the counsellor of the Most High? O that thou wouldst be mindful of the words of the wisest of kings, and say, ‘*Vanitatem et verba mendacii aliena fac a me.*’ Then the king, in great terror, and expecting death every moment, made his confession to the hermit, and publicly retracted the proud words, and immediately the tempest began to subside; but he never raised his eyes from the earth until it had wholly ceased. Then he changed his life for better; but though God had now forgiven him, nevertheless he punished him temporally; for his subsequent life was unfortunate, and he lost his crown, being de-

prived of it by his own son. Murcia, however, which he had conquered from the Sarassins, would never depart from fidelity to him; for which reason, when he was dying, he ordered that his heart should be transported thither and buried in the church of St. Mary, which he had himself built *."

The application of wisdom to spiritual things is guarded from abuse with great care by the scholastic philosophers. "Desire is often corrupted," says Richard of St. Victor, "when the intelligence is illuminated †. How many boast," he adds, "and wish to be glorious in the eyes of men, not because they have virtues or sanctity, but because they know how, prudently and learnedly, to discuss and dispute concerning virtues. O how much better and more useful would it be to have the gold of science, and not to have the silver of eloquence, with which you might make to yourself an idol! See how perverse and damnable it is to seek spiritual doctrine for ostentation alone, and not for edification! What does it profit, or, rather, how is it not perilous, with great labours and study to seek and investigate, and anxiously wish to know what in no manner you wish to reduce to practice? Often we see that it happens to minds of this kind, by a just judgment of God, that as at first they were spiritually provident for spiritual things, so afterwards they become carnally provident for the things of the flesh ‡." Again, "Often when we speak any thing subtilly with our neighbour, in commendation of divine grace, we glory within ourselves in the subtilty of our language. O the infinite folly of man! And rightly indeed do you say that man can do nothing without grace. This should be our deepest and most subtle thought, that in all our study our first solicitude should be to provide that our reliance may be wholly on grace; and that, whatever we effect, we should ascribe it to divine grace §." The titles of their controversial works are characteristic of this spirit: thus Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, inscribed his book against Berenger, *Lanfrancus Miseri-*

* Roderici Santii Episc. Palentini Hist. Hispanicæ pars iv. c. 5.

† De Eruditione Hom. Inter. lib. i. l. 40.

‡ Id. lib. i. l. c. 39.

§ Id. lib. i. c. 3.

cordia Dei Catholicus, Berengario Catholicæ Ecclesiæ Adversario.

“There are many,” continues Richard of St. Victor, who, when they receive the light of truth, immediately ascribe this to their merits or to their studies, magnifying and exalting themselves, and despising all others in comparison. The soul says to itself, ‘Super omnes docentes me intellexi,’ and endeavours to apply to itself that sentence of Solomon, ‘Præcessi sapientia omnes qui fuerunt ante me.’ On the contrary we ought to give glory to Him from whom we have received intelligence*.”

“Qui confidunt in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem; assument pinnas ut aquilæ. It is above human nature to have wings, and at volition to fly aloft to the Highest. What are these wings but a certain power of contemplation, which enables us to penetrate into the highest mysteries of hidden wisdom? But no one should presume of his own strength, or ascribe to his merits such an exaltation of intelligence; for it is the reward of divine, not of human, merit†.” How interesting are these comments of the school upon the words of St. Augustin, “Noli putare te ipsam esse lucem!”

Let us hear John Scot Erigena:—“The Father is light, and fire, and heat; and the Son is light, and fire, and heat; and the Holy Ghost is light, and fire, and heat: for the Father illuminates, the Son illuminates, and the Holy Ghost illuminates: for from them is derived all science and wisdom. The Father burns, the Son burns, and the Holy Ghost burns; for they together consume our sins, and convert us like a holocaust, by *ἁγίωσιν*; that is, deification into their unity. The Father warms, the Son warms, and the Holy Ghost warms; for with one and the same heat of charity they cherish and nourish us, and, as if from a certain information of our imperfection after the fall of the first man, lead us into the perfect man, into the plenitude of the age of Christ. But the perfect man is Christ, in whom are all things consummated, the plenitude of whose age is the consummation of the salvation of the whole church, which is constituted of angels and men‡.”

* Id. lib. i. l. 13.

† De Contemplatione, i. v. 4. 15.

‡ De Divisione Nat. lib. iv.

With thoughts so deep and humble their language respecting themselves naturally corresponded. Let us hear Scot again, who concludes his great work in the following words:—"Such is the matter of this work, divided into five books; concerning which, if any one should find that we have written any thing unknown and superfluous, let him impute it to our intemperance and want of attention, and with a pious heart let the humble contemplator excuse the human indigence as yet oppressed with the fleshly tabernacle; for, as I think, there is nothing as yet in this darksome life perfect in human studies, so as to be without all error. Since even the just are not called just, as yet living in the flesh, because they are just, but because they wish to be just, and, seeking the perfect future justice, are so styled merely from the affection of their minds. But if there should smile in it any thing useful pertaining to the edification of the Catholic faith, let it be ascribed to God alone, who alone can unravel the hidden things of darkness, and introduce to himself, deceived by no error, but cleansed from all errors, those who seek him. Let him, unanimous in the charity of the Spirit, return thanks with us to the Universal Cause of all good, without whom we can do nothing;—drawn by no lust of reprehension, kindled by no torch of envy, which alone, beyond all other vices, endeavours to break the bonds of charity and fraternity; but, in the peace of all, benevolently receiving the things here composed, and of all beholding them with the pure vision of the mind, or otherwise of all maliciously rejecting and prejudging things before they know what and how they are,—this work I offer, first, to the God of all, who said, Ask, and it shall be given to you—seek, and you shall find—knock, and it shall be opened to you; and then I commit it to you, brother most beloved in Christ, and my co-operator in the studies of wisdom, to be examined and corrected; for it was begun by your exhortation, and by your skill also it has in a manner been brought so far to an end. In the mean while, I trust that you will be content with the things which are already discussed, not considering the virtue of my genius, which is very small or nothing, but the faculty of your solicitude and of my weak but devoted investigation concerning these things, which you

ought to defend no less with the strength of your acute intelligence than with the lucubrations of my obtuse contemplation—I do not say with the emulous, but at least with the friends and inquirers of truth. Nor do I think that you will labour much in this; for as soon as such things come into the hands of those who rightly philosophize, since they agree with their disputations, not alone will they receive them with a willing mind, but even they will embrace them as their own. But if they should meet with those who are more ready to reprehend than to show compassion, one ought not to contend much with them. Let each one abound in his own sense, until that light cometh which of the light of those falsely philosophizing makes darkness, and converts the darkness of those recognizing it into light *.”

Such was the philosophic style in the Christian schools. St. Augustin concluded his books on the Trinity with this prayer:—“Domine Deus unus, Deus Trinitas, quæcumque dixi hic de tuo, agnoscant et tui: si quæ de meo, et tu ignosce, et tui. Amen.” The same spirit breathes in the last words of his immortal work on the city of God:—“Let those who find that I have said too little or too much pardon me; but let those who find that I have said what is sufficient, return thanks, not to me, but to God.”

The language of great Catholic philosophers, who appeared in Italy in the sixteenth century, is tuned to the same humble tone. Thus John Picus of Mirandula, in a letter to Thadæo Ugolino, speaks in these terms:—“If we have made any proficiency, it is the gift of God: to him be praise and thanksgiving;—if we have failed in any thing, it is our imbecility, and let it be imputed to us †.” In his Apology, defending gently his opinion respecting the mode of Christ’s descent into hell, he cites the authority of Durandus, and adds, “that great theologian of the Dominicans, who perhaps surpasses in learning those masters who oppose me as far as I am surpassed by them.” Marsilius Ficinus, describing the character of Cosmo de Medicis, after saying that he had happily philosophized with him during more than twelve years, and that, whatever he may have owed to Plato, he

* De Divisione Nat. lib. v.

† Epist. lib. i. 18.

owes no less to Cosmo, conclude : with this testimony : “than whose mind nothing amongst men is more humble, and on the other hand nothing more lofty *.”

But let us return to the school in the middle ages, and hear, as its representative, Richard of St. Victor, whose humility continually breaks out. Thus, on one occasion, he stops suddenly, and says, “But it is better to leave this place to be explained by erudite minds, than on such a matter to presume any thing rashly beyond our strength †.” On another, he thus apologizes for undertaking to supply a commentary on Ezekiel :—“I know, indeed, that the Fathers have more negligently passed over certain places of Scripture through which they could easily have penetrated. Let no one, then, be scandalized if we should say any thing otherwise than what is found in the glosses ; let no one be angry if we should wish to collect the scattered ears which remain, or wonder that they to whom it was given to fill so many granaries with the harvest of the Scriptures should have chosen to leave somewhat for the poor. You wish to honour and defend the authority of the ancients, but we never more truly honour the lovers of truth than by seeking, finding, teaching, defending, loving truth. Attend, therefore, to watch, not whether I say any thing new, but whether any thing true. *‘Tu vis honorare et defendere veterum auctoritatem, sed nunquam verius honoramus veritatis amatores quam quærendo, inveniando, docendo, defendendo, diligendo veritatem. Attende ergo non utrum dicam aliquid novum, sed verum ‡.’*”

Again, what deep humility breathes in every line that St. Bonaventura ever wrote ! In all his works he shows himself the humblest of men. Thus in his book on the Confessional he says, “A simple person, writing for the simple with simplicity, I have ordained the parts of the present little work according as things occurred to my memory rather than according to their natural coherence together, supplicating every one, with all the humility and devotion in my power, thus—

*Sis mihi corrector, resecando superflua, lector,
Veraque digneris, qua desunt, jungere veris :*

* Mars. Fic. Epist. lib. i. † De Contemplatione, lib. v. 19.

‡ Explanatio Templi Ezek. c. 10.

Omnem defectum pariter studio brevitatis
Scribentis tribuas, partim vitio ruditatis."

Above all, in his book "*De puritate conscientiæ*," we can observe how humbly he thought of himself, never being ashamed to admit his unintentional errors. All these great men use the words of St. Augustin, in the beginning of his book of *Retractions*, resolving that "he who cannot have the first part of wisdom, may at least gain the second, which is modesty; and that he who has not been able to say all things not to be repented of, may at least repent having said what he knows he should not have said *." Gerson speaks in the same manner, "At the table of wisdom, in the refectory of the church militant, at the banquet of Christ, it is right that new dishes should be assiduously supplied, and different aliments provided, in order that what does not please the internal palate of one may provoke the appetite of another; for there is as much diversity of internal tastes as there are tastes of the body. Far be it from me, miserable, to suppose that I could bring excellent meats of my own to the table of wisdom, but every one should bring what he can, and the poverty of one does not detract from the riches of others, but rather serves as a foil to show it to more advantage."

Men talk of the dogmatism of the school; but such charges arise from an indistinctness of idea respecting its functions. Hugo of St. Victor praises the modesty of Dionysius the Areopagite, for tempering his assertions with an *ut existimo* †. And in general all the great luminaries of the scholastic world adopted the same tone; for which Montaigne might justly have admired them, as contrasted with those who made him, as he says, hate probable things by planting them for infallible. The words which he so loved, as softening and moderating the temerity of our propositions, perhaps, it is said, I think, and such like, abound in the works of these philosophers.

"Let us enquire then, together, concerning this matter," says St. Anselm, "but you must understand me in the manner in which I desire that all things uttered by

* In Prolog. *Retract.*

† Lib. *Exposit. in Cœlest. Hier.* c. 11.

me should be taken ; that is, if I should say anything which a higher authority does not confirm, although I should seem to prove it by reason, it must not be received as certain, but only as what seems to me, until God shall reveal it better. Moreover, it is to be known, that whatever a man can say, or know, concerning this mystery of the incarnation, there are still higher reasons for it than any which are as yet known*.” Melchior Canus says of his master in the schools, that he has learned from him to swear by the words of no single master, and yet to avoid presumption in dissenting from any one. “That man,” he adds, “was by nature itself moderate, and when he sometimes differed from St. Thomas, he gained, in my opinion, more praise by dissenting than by assenting ; such reverence did he evince in dissenting †.”

In the conclusion of his treatise, “*De sapientia animæ Christi*,” Hugo of St. Victor speaks of those who differ from him, and says, “I do not wish to prejudge any one. Let them see in what sense they hold this, lest, perchance, it should be carnal, pronouncing more what is their own than what is true. As for him, however, who thus believes amiss, I do not compel, but I exhort him to believe well. Let him, who will not believe me, believe himself, until he shall come to that place where he will believe with me : only, in the interim, let each one study with humility to abound in his own sense, and not arrogantly presume ‡.”

A thousand passages of this kind might be produced to show, that these great men, whose hearts were knit in Catholic unity, were deeply imbued with the sentiment expressed in these latter times by Frederick Schlegel, where he says, “Even if the power were given to me, by a magical force of persuasion, to impart my conviction to the generality of the world, I would not desire it ; for I could not regard such a command as right or conformable to philosophy. For philosophy can only be a private self-remembrance, and proceed from a personal sentiment, and a personal necessity. No communication in philosophy, therefore, can have any other

* *Cur Deus Homo*, lib. i. c. 2.

† *De Locis Theologicis*, lib. xii. c. 1.

‡ *Op. Tom.* iii. 33.

object, than only to excite a living motion, and to set right the result of private sentiment. Whoever earnestly seeks for truth, has already within him a beginning of faith, hope, and charity, in some form or other *."

We see then how little resemblance such men bore to him, whom Cicero feared to reprehend, excusing himself by saying, "Est enim tanti philosophi tamque nobilis audacter sua decreta defendere †." But, in truth, this humility, in the lovers of wisdom, was one of the privileges of the new race, whose hearts had been made clean; and beyond the chosen multitude one could not expect to find it. As the Greek poet says, "The furies are older than Minerva ‡."

The Holy Church hath, from age to age, heard herself reproved by men, resembling each other only in their confidence; to each of whom her doctors might justly have applied the language of the prophet: "Superbia ejus, et arrogantia ejus, et indignatio ejus plus quam fortitudo ejus." "Though he provoke to war," used her doctors to say with St. Ambrose, "yet we answer to one attacking as not attacked, for our object was to refute a relation, not to repel an injury §." You are older and much wiser than me, might they add, in the words of Minerva to the ministers of wrath,—

φρονεῖν δὲ κάμοι Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν οὐ κακῶς.

While the patience and sweetness of those who utter Catholic wisdom, have often succeeded in persuading men, who seemed at first inflexible, and been rewarded with hearing their submission.

Θέλξειν μ' ἔοικας, καὶ μεθίσταμαι κότον ||.

The change, however, which took place in the intellectual character of philosophers and learned men, at the epoch of the great religious revolution, is a fact too important not to be remarked. Joseph Scaliger, whose family pride was itself indeed a new phenomenon in the scholastic character, complained, in a letter to Isaac Casaubon, that the manners of the learned were grown

* Philosophie der Sprache, 231.

† De Finibus, ii. 10.

‡ Eumenid.

§ Lib. ii. Epist. 12.

|| Eumenid. 900.

more arrogant, and worse in all respects than they had formerly been. "In times past," he says, "there were certain bounds, that minds of this class did not transgress; but now, if Prometheus had wished to make a monster that would exceed the chimera, he would find it in the mind of a *pædagogus*. At present, no one is learned unless *ἀγροῖκος*, barbarous, insolent; and this iron age is abandoned by the muses*." Alas, they might well look back with regret to the days of Richard of St. Victor, when it was considered a rare thing to find persons, who, if they should make a short accent long, would feel more shame for that vice of language, than for the vice of pride†.

As a last instance, displaying the humility of the clean of heart in relation to the study of philosophy, we must briefly revert to their devout submission to the authority of God, announced by the voice of the Holy See.

Man, in a state of innocence, was guided and retained in truth by the authoritative voice of his Maker; and he first began to deviate from the path of truth, when he listened to that voice of opposition, the voice of negation, of criticism, that lying voice "Thou shalt not die." In this, as Petrus Crinitus remarked, the ancient philosophers agree with the Christian wisdom, teaching that nothing is better in life, than to be subject to the decree of divine truth, and to acquiesce in its majesty§. The submission of Catholics to the church, is an instance, most eminent, of the advantage resulting to the intelligence from the liberty of a clean heart. Let us refer, however, to their writings, at first, in order to observe the fact.—Hear then how Raymund Lully speaks in the prologue to his *Art of finding Truth*: "If the great deficiency of our words, or, that we may speak more sententiously, of our genius, or the insufficiency of a translator, should seem to favour any error against the holy Catholic faith, we suppliantly implore the correction of the holy Roman Church." The same expressions occur in the prologue to his lecture on the same art; and again, at the end of his lecture on the figures of the art of demonstrating truth, he says, "If we have said

* Epist. lib. i. 52.

† Ric. S. Vict. de Præparat. Animi ad Contemplat. cap. 46.

§ De Honest. Discip. lib. v. 8.

any thing ill, or if we have omitted any thing ill, the fault is to be ascribed to our ignorance and our fragility: we suppliantly implore that it may receive the correction of the holy Roman Church; as also other things which we do, or propose to do, to the exaltation of the knowledge and love of the omnipotent God;" and in the prologue to his book on the fourteen articles of the faith, he says, "Since I, the compiler of this work, am culpable, and a sinner, very poor in science, and merits, and other things which accord with virtues, I submit it to the correction of the holy Roman faith. If in any places of this work, through ignorance and impropriety of words, or their insufficiency to the high matter, I should have said any thing contrary to the holy faith built by our Lord Jesus Christ, and preserved by his chief pontiff St. Peter, and all the prelates of the holy church, subject to the discipline of the Roman faith, suppliantly, and with all the devotion of my heart, I beg that it may receive their correction as the work of a faithful Christian, confessing and protesting that he does not err voluntarily, but alone through ignorance, and because he is unworthy to treat on such lofty subjects." More than twenty times do these professions occur in the different works of this philosopher and martyr.

Without delaying, however, to accumulate passages from writers, more especially theological, whose docility every one is prepared to observe, let us hear the most eminent of that throng of illustrious laymen, who appeared in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. "I have undertaken," says John Picus of Mirandula, "to write my own apology, not with a view to attack or wound any other, but merely to defend myself from the most grievous charge of heresy, which, St. Jerome says, every Christian should repel, or he must pass for not being a Christian. Some say that, being only twenty-four years of age, it is presumption in me to dare to treat on the loftiest places of philosophy, and on the sublimest mysteries of the Christian theology; but whatever we have written, or shall write hereafter, is said always with this preface,—that only that is to be counted true and holy which the supreme pontiff, and all those of whose judgment he approves, decree to be true and holy. There are, perhaps, many things in my propositions which may offend pious, unlearned ears, and for that

reason I have now written this apology: I intreat, therefore, and beseech friends and enemies, pious and impious, learned and unlearned, by the bowels of Jesus Christ our Lord, by the admirable mystery of his descent into hell, by the eternal fire of the damned which, for heretics especially, and the enemies of the holy Roman church, is inextinguishable; by the Sacrament of the true and mystical body and blood, by the omnipotence of God, and by the reverence due to the images of his Son, and of his coheirs, that they read without malice, without envy, what I have now written. Let them not read the former propositions, which have not been explained, because we proposed to discuss them before the learned only. We have not published them to be read to all—for there are many impious dogmas of the ancient philosophers, Averroes, Alexander, and many others, which we always, both privately and publicly, declared were aliens from true and right philosophy as well as from faith, though, as a scholastic exercise, after the manner of the Academics, we disputed concerning them in secret conclave amongst a few learned men. These things then learned and illustrious men, both of domestic and foreign academies, will examine—the Holy See will judge; and sitting thereupon Innocent VIII., whose judgment to resist or neglect is impious and flagitious. He is the supreme judge on earth; who represents him who is the judge of quick and dead. He is the dispenser and treasurer of truth; who stands in the place of him who is truth itself, and who, being made flesh, dwelt in us, that he might announce unto us truth.” Of the advantage resulting to the intelligence from such an authority, we shall have occasion to speak anon.—Meanwhile, from the humility, the transition is smooth to the practical character of the philosophy of the clean of heart, in ages of faith.

Wisdom, according to the scholastic philosophers, is both cognoscitive and appetitive, as making us not only know, but also love and affect what is right. “Knowledge is called science,” says St. Bonaventura, “inasmuch as it comprises truth; and it is called wisdom when this knowledge is accompanied with the love of God*.”

* De Sept. Grad. Vit. Spir. c. 74.

“The end of theology,” says Henry of Ghent, “is practical, appertaining to life and manners*.”

“The end of theology,” says Melchior Canus, “is the same as that of the holy Scriptures, and of all divine scriptures: the end is love,” as Augustin and Gregory remark; “therefore theology tends not chiefly to contemplation, but to love†.” St. Bonaventura expresses himself in these remarkable terms, in the prologue to his Books of Sentences. “For if we consider the intellect in itself, it is in such wise properly speculative, that it is perfected by habit, which is the grace of contemplation, otherwise called speculative science; but if we consider it as born to be extended to work, it is perfected by such habit as causes us to become good, and that is practical or moral science. But if, in a middle way, it be considered as born to be extended to affection, it is perfected by such habit as occupies a middle place between what is purely speculative, and the practical, which embraces both; and this habit is called wisdom, which is at the same time knowledge and affection. The grace of contemplation therefore is principally given that we may become good. Such is the knowledge delivered in this book. For this knowledge assists faith, and faith is so far in the intelligence, that in its own manner it is born to move the affections. For this knowledge Christus pro nobis mortuus est, and similar, unless man be a sinner and hardened move to love and devotion.”

John of Salisbury says, that “keeping the commandments of God is the most secure, and, indeed, the only way of making a progress in philosophy;” a judgment, truly, not calculated to extend his reputation as a philosopher in these days, when every Tyro reverses the sentence of David, and says in his heart, “I have understood more than the aged, because I have disregarded thy commandments.” However, not merely in a pious, but in a strict philosophic sense, the wisdom of Israel’s holy king was recognized by the clean of heart.

“Mores perducunt ad intelligentiam,” says the profound Augustin ‡, “which truth, even the ancient sages

* Henric. Gand. Sum. tom. i. art. 8, Q. 111. f. 65.

† De Locis Theolog. lib. xii. c. 2.

‡ Tract. 18. in Joan.

had discerned, as may be seen in Plato and Cicero, who both shew that virtue is the perfection of reason *.” Frederick Schlegel remarks that, “clear abstract thought, separated from life, is now held to be the only right way of philosophy; nay, that it is identified with philosophy.” “This clear and abstract thought, as it is called, suffers,” he says, “no supposition to remain valid, and it supplies nothing, and it has no ground of foundation but itself: it goes forth alone, from itself, and has no peculiar beginning and no end; it has no limits, but it revolves eternally within its own magic circle †.” Such was not the idea of philosophy in the scholastic ages, when the most profound men would, like John Picus of Mirandula, have continually on their tongues the saying of St. Francis, “*Tantum scit homo quantum operatur ‡.*” Theirs was a philosophy not of words and of abstract ideas, but of things and of life. “All men should not be philosophers,” say some, but, continues St. Clement of Alexandria, “should not all men partake of life? What say you then? Do you not believe? How can you love God and your neighbour without being a philosopher, and how can you love yourself unless you love life §?” The philosophy of Catholic schools consisted not in pompous phrases and beautiful discourses, but in humble answers and in beautiful deeds; so that it would have been well for many of the new learning, who excused them of wanting a true philosophy, if they could have thought and written as nobly as these men acted. Not as if in the Lyceum or in the portico, disputing with a Greek preceptor, but, in action, did the youth of Catholic nations learn wisdom.

So when John of Salisbury has spoken of the modesty of Christian youths, and their reverence for age, he exclaims, “what Athens, what school, what foreign academy shall I prefer to this domestic discipline? From them, indeed, proceeded Plato, yet I have known a man greatly inferior to Plato, excepting that he is a Christian, and I do not think it lawful to prefer even Plato to a Christian—I have known a man, I say, who was always suffering from disease, and yet in the midst of pain always rejoicing, strengthened in the knowledge of God, despising the

* De Finibus, lib. iv.

† Philosophie der Sprache. 18.

‡ In Vita ejus.

§ Pædagog. lib. iii. c. 11.

world, and embracing every cross presented to him by the hand of the Lord *."

The philosophy of the schoolmen, subtle and profound as were their debates, was not that of dialecticians, who would rather dispute acutely than live prudently; nor of physicians, who live in the air, or in the bowels of the earth, and are strangers, not citizens, in the society of men; but it was of men, who, by the discharge of the ordinary duties of their respective conditions, were to make their calling and election sure. This direction of the human energies effected every thing in the society of Catholic states, so that Pasquier can discern its traces even in the eloquence and practice of the bar. "The Roman orator" says he, "had to do with a people who fed themselves on words, and from the people they expected all their grandeur: their sole study was how to harangue in public; but as for us, we must in our pleading have more nerve and less flesh. If we were to allow ourselves the reins like the ancients, we should be laughed at for our pains. We do not profess the art of speaking like them, nor would their style be tolerated in our parliaments †."

"How often," exclaims Richard of St. Victor, "doth man know the way of truth, without walking in it, being drawn aside and enticed by his concupiscence. Such a man, indeed, has the day of knowledge, but not the cloud of refreshing grace; and some have night, but not the fire of illuminating grace ‡." "The shortest and most certain method of discerning truth," says Malebranche, "is to live as a true Christian—to follow exactly the precepts of eternal truth—to hear our faith rather than our reason; for it is by faith alone that God will lead us into that immense light of truth which will dissipate all our darkness for ever. They who trust in God will understand truth, and the faithful will acquiesce in his love." "Better is it," says the great Christian Platonist, Marsilius Ficinus, "to love than to scan eternal things—to judge them well is most difficult—to love them ill impossible; never can they be loved ill, provided they are fervently loved, for they can never be

* De Nugis Curialium, lib. viii. c. 8.

† Lettres de Pasquier, liv. xi. 6.

‡ De Contemplatione, lib. v. 15.

loved too much, yea, rather they can never be sufficiently loved. It is the contrary with temporal things; for it is better to judge than to love them*." To the same effect were all the instructions of John Picus of Mirandula: "see my Angelo," he said to Politian, "what insanity it is not to love God more than we can speak or know, while we are in the body, since, by loving, we make greater proficiency as regards ourselves, labour less, and obey him more. Yet we would rather always by knowledge never find what we seek, than by loving possess that which, without loving, must be sought in vain†."

So truly from the heart did this great philosopher utter these words, that according to the testimony of his nephew, John Francis, he valued more the most minute aspiration of any old man or old woman towards God, than all his own knowledge of divine and human things‡. These illustrious lovers of wisdom had well meditated on the maxims of the saints, and had drunk deep of that living truth, which breathes throughout their writings. "Although, in human things," says St. Bonaventura, "it is necessary to understand before being moved, yet in the true and experimental knowledge of divine things, it is necessary first to perceive by love before understanding by the intelligence. For this is the general rule in mystic theology, that it is necessary first to have practice, and then theory; that is, the usage of exercise in the heart before the knowledge of the thing itself; for God is above all creatures, and can only be known by approximation; and since love alone makes the soul approximate to him, the more ardently a soul loves, the nearer it approximates to the fountain of light, and, consequently, the more it is illuminated with knowledge; therefore, we must love before we can understand§." In conformity with these views was the whole philosophy of the ages of faith. One of its great characteristics is practicability. Nothing can be so easily reduced to action, and accommodated to all the diversified circumstances of human life. What, for instance, can be more designed for familiar use than the great principle of self-renouncement, of taking up the cross, of obedience, of love? To

* Mar. Fic. Epist. Jacobo Bracciolino. † In vita ejus.

‡ Id.

§ S. Bonavent. Mystica Theologia.

think is the great boast of modern times, but it would be well if we attended to what Catholic philosophers observed on this head, "do you wish to think usefully?" asks Marsilius Ficinus, "then," replies he, "think upon as few things as possible. In exiguo cespite latet lepus. Patent ubique mala; in angustum redactum est quod bonum est*." The thinkers of the ages of faith had reduced the essential points of moral philosophy within a small compass, and had expressed them all in what they termed the Christian's alphabet. It was as follows:—"Ama nesciri. Benevolus omnibus. Custodi cor. Dilige solitudinem. Elige paupertatem. Fuge. Gratias age. Humilia te. Intentio pura. Charissimi qui premunt. Labore et dolore. Magnus qui minimus. Neminem spernas. Omne tempus Deo. Placetne Deo? Quid ad te? Revertere. Sobrius esto. Time Deum. Vende omnia. Ὑμνον cane cum Deo. Χριστὸς sit vita. Za, chæe, descende." If you will hear Novalis, no superficial thinker, I suppose, the spiritual life, thus taught, is philosophy, κατ' ἐξοχήν. Beyond the mark at which these men aimed there was no progress to be looked for. "Since," as St. Thomas says, "it is manifest that the goodness of the human will depends much more upon the eternal law than upon human reason, so that where human reason fails one must have recourse to the eternal reason †"

"Therefore," as Bonald remarks, "the name of modern philosophy is one of reprobation, for in morals every doctrine which is not as ancient as man, or as the gospel, is an error ‡." Another characteristic of the Catholic philosophy, arising indeed as a necessary consequence from those already noticed, was its clearness and communicability. Whatever may be said of the schoolmen, in their relation to physical science, within the important sphere of religion and morals, no one can accuse them of indistinctness of ideas; for, according to the order prescribed by Richard of St. Victor, those, who passed to theoretics, had previously had the eye of their mind purified by ethics. Their language was explicit, not with oracular response obscure, such as ere the Lamb of God was slain, beguiled the credulous nations, but formed of terms precise, conveying unambiguous

* Epist. lib. i.

† Q. xix. art. 4.

‡ Legislat. Prim. i. 27.

lore. As Savonarola observes, “never was the world presented with a doctrine so clear and communicable as the Catholic wisdom: all other systems are obscure, and scarcely comprehensible after long study, and always burdened with many perplexities; but, in the Catholic church, persons of all age and condition, and of both sexes, have an immediate answer to give every one, who asks them concerning the points on which all other men have ever disputed, and do still dispute, and become so constant and immovable, that multitudes would rather suffer a thousand deaths than deny the least iota of what they have received *.” Hence one of the most learned of the holy Fathers says, “alike must philosophize, both slave and free man, man and woman †.” Henry of Ghent expressly shews, that women and boys are quite competent and proper to have the science of theology expounded to them ‡.

Francis Picus of Mirandula remarks, “that to the study of divine philosophy, and of the sacred letters, all the ancient theologians exhort men of every condition, and amongst our contemporaries, he adds, Pope Innocent and John Gerson, who say, that not merely those whose especial business it is to study theology as priests and clerks; but that all men of every rank and order, as far as they have opportunity, should so apply themselves §.” We observed in the Third Book what care had been expended to instil truth, by even material monuments, into the minds of the people in all Catholic states; for the wisdom of the school, like the powerful but unsystematic speculation of the earliest sages of Greece, was capable of being expressed and taught by inscriptions in the front of chapels, along the public way. It resembled in this capability the old gnostic, or sententiary philosophy of Thales, Anaximander, Pherecydes, and the others of that first period. One of St. Bonaventura’s works is entitled *Breviloquii*. So that on beholding these symbolic holy images, paintings, and inscriptions placed on all sides, with the cross, one might, with peculiar justice, exclaim, “numquid non sapientia clamat, et prudentia dat vocem

* *Triump. Crucis*, lib. ii. 14.

† *S. Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. iv. 1. ‡ *Hen. Gand.* tom. ii.

§ *De Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philosophiæ*, lib. ii. cap. 1.

suam? In summis excelsisque verticibus, supra viam, in mediis semitis, stans juxta portas civitatis, in ipsis foribus, loquitur dicens, O Viri, ad vos clamito, et vox mea ad filios hominum. Intelligite parvuli astutiam, et insipientes animadvertite *.”

“In fact,” as Bonald says, “while the law of the state promulgated its sentence in the tribunals, the moral or divine law was taught by religion, and inculcated every where—at the domestic hearth and on the public places, in cities and in the country, in temples and in camps. Each man, whatever might be his profession, ‘found wisdom seated at his gate; it shewed itself to man in all his paths;’ and if it was not obeyed every where, it was at least no where contradicted †.” No where either was it perverted by professed teachers of religion; for the race had not then sprung up, who turn revelation into a thing of riddles and conundrums, for men to exercise their wits withal, disguising plain and intelligible truth under the form of a silly paradox. The pulpits of the middle ages were not employed for announcing minute systematic arrangements of opinions, building up of paradoxes to be pulled down by explanations, elaborate proofs of mere truisms, when the conclusions are just as easily admitted as the premises, consolations of factitious griefs, solutions of imaginary difficulties, discoveries of new interpretations of texts, removal of fears, which no body ever felt, warning against dangers, which no body ever fell into, but they were used by Apostolic teachers, who taught from them the duties of men, as Christians, as masters, as servants, as neighbours, as citizens—who unmasked the delusions of self-love, and vanity, and pride, and passion, which veil men’s imperfections from themselves, and impede their progress in the paths of wisdom.

Again, the idea of philosophy, and the mode of popular education in ages of faith, differed, no doubt, greatly from that proposed at present; but intelligent observers have remarked, that this abundant external learning, on which the whole of modern philosophy and education are grounded, and in which alone they consist, weakens oftener and blunts the faculties of the mind, the elasticity of the intellectual life, all, in short, that is natural and cannot be learned; so that when men have obtained the

* Salom. c. viii.

† Legislat. Prim. i. 213.

office, or post, which was their object in view, in amassing all this learning, entering upon life as men, the majority, when they do not entirely throw aside their philosophy, merely vegetate with lame withered minds, devoid of all higher interest. In Catholic times it was otherwise; the youth did not learn so much perhaps out of books, but neither did he forget so much, and the faculties of his mind remained fresher, more youthful, richer in experience, in sound manly understanding. He had a living interest in what he knew, and an ardent desire after that which he knew not; "his knowledge in general," as Huber says, "was of that kind which gives a lighter and fresher nourishment to the living members of a social state, than can be yielded by the modern stiff book learning, book philosophy, and sentimentality." Shakspeare drew from memory of Catholic manners, when he described "one bred among woods and mountains, and yet gentle; never school'd, and yet learned; full of noble device; of all sorts enchantingly beloved."

Hence, in ages of faith, most thinking men would have agreed with Stephen Pasquier, "in believing that there was never a greater philosopher in the world, nor more true than the voice of the people, which concurs on the same subject." Ventura says, "that in consequence, the rudest people in a Catholic country are more practically wise in all things relative to life, than the teachers themselves of other nations *." The common talk of the one, is wiser than the books of the others, and they speak wiser even than they may be always themselves aware of. St. Thomas, who drew such wisdom from the cross, lays it down as an axiom to guide all instructors in philosophy, that stability and clearness must be ever attended to. *Stabilitas, ut non devient a veritate; claritas, ut non doceant cum obscuritate.*

We might apply a Thucydidean phrase to all these philosophers, and say *γνώμην δὲ ἐποιοῦντο*—they had fixed, decided, irreversible judgments; they were not men of vague, fugitive opinions. The Catholic philosophy, notwithstanding all its constellations, had not secular variations; whereas that which opposed it had periodical variations from the influence of each poor meteor that approached it in its eccentric path. Here, then, one

* *De Methodo Philosophandi.*

perceives that great advantage to which I before alluded, as resulting to the intelligence from the habit of submitting to the voice of the Holy See—which was ordained to preserve the understanding of Christians from passing beyond the bounds of knowledge, to set at rest the questions of curious men, and to preserve the humble from their seduction,—voice hereditary, with power to condemn every new error, and to determine every question respecting faith *,—“voice,” which as St. Bernard says, “cannot err, such being its prerogative †,”—voice, which in point of fact, has never been detected of error, for what is related in the Roman Breviary of St. Marcellus has been disproved by St. Augustin, has never acknowledged that it might err, has never been revoked ‡,—voice of divine power, ordained for the confirmation of the brethren, which would tend to the destruction, and not to the safety of the Church, if it had not been infallible. Let a modern and illustrious disciple, who had been misled by a genius which he over highly prized, attest its efficacy as regarding himself.

“I came to understand,” says Lacordaire, “how I had been subdued in attempting to contend with an intelligence superior to mine. There must be in the world a power, which can sustain inferior minds against the strong, and which can deliver them from the most terrible of all oppressions, that of the intelligence. This power came to my assistance; I did not deliver myself, but it delivered me. On arriving at Rome, I knelt at the tomb of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and besought God, saying, ‘Lord, I begin to feel my weakness, error and truth equally escape from me; have pity on thy servant, hear the prayer of the poor.’ I know not the day or the hour, but I have seen what I had not seen. I left Rome free and victorious, having learned by my own experience that the Church is the liberator of the human mind; and, as from the liberty of intelligence flow necessarily all other liberties, I perceived in their true light the questions which this day divide the world §.” What confidence in these words, and yet what humility! The

* S. Thom. N. 2. q. 1. ar. 10.

† Epist. ad Inn. ii. 190 in Præf.

‡ Greg. xvi. Il Trionfo della S. Sede, cap. 24.

§ Considérations sur le Syst. Philos. de M. de la Mennais.

secret had been long ago explained by the schoolmen. "Behold," says Richard of St. Victor, "how charity makes man presume beyond man, by making him presume in God*." With respect to the philosophical instruction of the schools, we have already observed how false is the supposition that it was occupied exclusively with trivial debates and unmeaning subtilties. It remains to shew that obscurity was always regarded as its abuse and its defect, while its general object was to impart clear and definite conceptions of truth. Men talk now of the night of the dark ages, but it is not by reference to the scholastic philosophers, that they can substantiate the charge; for in the serene splendour of eternal light these men walked as had the ancient Fathers, and the just have always had immortal light sprung from the father of the light of saints. The proud and restless spirits on the contrary have been in the pain of outward darkness in times past as well as now.

If the scholastic ages must be designated as night, it was one like that of which the Church so grandly sings at the opening of her Paschal solemnities—the night which purged the darkness of sins by the illumination of the column—the night which restored to grace and associated with sanctity those throughout the universal world, who believed in Christ—the night of which it is written, *et nox sicut dies illuminabitur*—the night whose holiness put wickedness to flight, washed out sins, restored innocence to the fallen, joy to mourners, dispelled hatred, produced concord, and subdued empires; truly blessed night, in which earthly with celestial, human with divine things were joined. So far from obscurity being characteristic of the philosophy of the ages of faith, we might securely affirm that it is peculiarly distinguished from that of later times, by its aversion to whatever is confused and subversive of clear distinct conceptions.

A German philosopher remarks, "the instructive character which belongs to all the writings of Hugo of St. Victor, which merited for him the title of Didascalus, and also the purity, simplicity, and uprightness, which ever directed him to move straight forward, and say what he thought, without any of that endless reflecting self-

* De Grad. Viol. Charitatis.

consciousness, which, with coldness and vanity, kills in the bud so much that is noble and fair *.” He concludes his critical examination of his works, by citing Oudin, who says, “that when a sound criticism has been exercised in giving a new edition, *velut os Domini Hugo Victorinus erit.*” Again, of St. Bonaventura, Trithemius says that, “he is profound not verbose, subtle not curious, learned not vain.” But let us hear the scholastics speak expressly on this point.

On the words of Seneca, “*Odibilis nihil est subtilitate ubi est sola subtilitas,*” Peter Chanter, the celebrated theologian of the twelfth century, comments, saying, “Nothing is so adverse to utility as too much subtilty. Do not move and scatter dust, lest by so doing the eyes of thy mind be involved and obscured, or even quite darkened †.”

“*Quicumque auctor scientiarum humanarum,*” says Duns Scotus, “quanto acutior intellectu tanto plus vitat superfluitatem in tradendo ‡.”

Against the abuse of philosophy none were more strenuous than those who loved and pursued it with the greatest success, as Pope Gregory IX., who admonished the professors of Paris not to prefer through vanity philosophy to their science, which alone has the true spirit of life; to beware of error, and not to wish to seem learned rather than to be of God learned, not to return from heavenly to the low and dark elements of the world and of nature, which served man only in his childhood; and reminding them that they can only become more and more thirsty by drinking out of the fountains which are not those of grace §.

For advance in philosophy Catholics, in all ages, looked to that Divine Master whose property it is, as the prophetic voice proclaimed, to teach useful things. *Ego Dominus Deus tuus, docens te utilia* ||; and therefore it has ever been the aim of sophists to persuade the world that the church had no science which deserved the name of philosophy.

* Liebner Hugo von S. Vict. und die Theol. Richtungen Seiner zeit. 33.

† In Lib. de Verbo Abbreviato, c. 3.

‡ Duns Scot. in Lib. Sent. Prolog. q. 11.

§ Regist. Greg. IX. year 11. || Is. 48.

Albert the Great denounces “the study of those subtle books with which the devil leads the minds of men from purely and simply adhering to God *.” What would he have said to the philosophic literature of the northern nations in modern times? What would the scholastics have thought of these men, who have no other God, as the ancient poet would say, but the tongue and chaos? each of whom passes his days in nothing else but sophisticating and introducing new ideas, ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ καινὰς ἰδέας εἰσφέρων σοφίζομαι? What would the Angelic Doctor have concluded from hearing these revolting and insane paradoxes left to the world as their table-talk, which are deemed to be so profound because most shocking and horrible to the common sense of men?—assertions false, or little else but dreams, conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm? At the least, I think, he would class many books of great celebrity at present with the Talmud, as being compositions in which one can learn little but the art of saying nothing in a multitude of words. It is a remark which occurs in Plato’s Republic, as the result of experience, “that the greatest number of men who pursue philosophy, who do not abandon it in youth, but continue to pursue it long after, become altogether most strange and whimsical persons—ἀλλοκότους.” And this is only another instance of his talent of observation; for that the wisdom which men elicit from their own independent thoughts, unrestrained and disdainful of external instruction, frequently leads to ridiculous results, is a fact which can be witnessed without going back to heathen times; since the most absurd and truly whimsical sentences that can be found in the whole range of pagan literature may be matched, perhaps, without any very great difficulty from the pages of writers in modern times, who profess to aid reflection.

Priam says, that when Ulysses was a guest in his house, he spoke few words, but clear:—

Παῦρα μὲν, ἀλλὰ μάλα λιγέως* ἐπεὶ οὐ πολὺμυθος
οὐδ’ ἀφαιμαρτοεπής†.

Such a testimony at present would not be thought to

* Albert Mag. de Adhærendo Deo, cap. 4. † Il. iii. 214.

indicate a philosophic traveller, but it would admirably express the effects of Catholic discipline. It is easy, however, to understand why men who love to indulge their genius in an interminable flow of words should detest the scholastic philosophy which includes the gift of Empedocles to stop the wind: men who seem to wish that it should be difficult to know what they think or what they wish must needs consider its logic as vulgarity. How many writers of this kind now launch forth upon a sea of vague unintelligible abstractions, where there is no bottom or anchorage. One can see nothing fixed or solid in their discourses. "Cœlum undique et undique pontus." If you do not find the cross and blessed names interwoven with their compositions, they have deities of their own, like Euripides, the air and volubility of tongue.

S. Clemens says, that Alexander of Macedon, desiring to select the best of the Indian gymnosophists, chose from them ten who seemed to be the wisest, and who spoke the shortest words, *καὶ βραχυλογώτατους* *. That would not be the criterion at present. The men who are now most conspicuous in opposition to the Catholic philosophy resemble rather those followers of Heraclitus, or the disciples of Ephesus, whom Theodorus describes to Socrates. "These men," saith he, "seem impelled to writing by a certain frantic impulse, but you can no more argue with them than with the frantic; for to await reasoning and interrogation, and peaceably to answer in their turns, and to speak, is found in them less than nothing, or, rather, this nothing is what gets the better in them, on account of their never possessing the least tranquillity. If you advance any thing against them, they shoot out enigmatical shadows of sentences as if drawing them from a quiver; and if you seek to seize the argument, and to make out what they have said, they will strike you with another, newly changed in expression, so that you will never be able to terminate any thing with any one of them. Nay, they never come to agreement even with each other; but, above all things, they take care to guard against there being suffered any thing fixed or immovable either in their

* Strom. vi. 4.

discourse or in their souls ; thinking, as I suppose, that this is the part of one who makes tranquillity and rest ; and against this they wage war with all their might, endeavouring to cast it from them." "Perchance, O Theodorus !" replies Socrates, "you have seen these men contending, but never while at peace ; for they are not your companions, but I suppose they converse differently with their own disciples." "What disciples?" exclaims Theodorus ; "since no one of them will learn as a disciple from another, but they grow up of themselves, each enthusiastically uttering whatever chance may have taught him, and each thinking that the others know nothing *." "Plato, genuine prophet and anticipator as he was of the Protestant Christian era !" says Mr. Coleridge. Be it so ; only let us add, also, painter and historian.

Truly, with these philosophers of the misty school, who are more fine writers than deep thinkers, who give empty words, sound without mind, the clearest and most certain things are made to assume the character of a speculation. What will they do with hidden and obscure things, who endeavour to take away light? If St. Thomas had heard one of our great adepts in philosophy, I think he would have been content to answer him from the poet, and say, "I am not wiser than the Minerva of Æschylus, who says, she will learn if one shall choose to deliver a clear discourse *ἐμφανῆ λόγον* †."

Richard of St. Victor complains that the poverty of human language compels us often to vary the signification of words : so far was he from wishing to study obscurity. Moreover the Catholic philosophy never suffered men to rest their opinions upon any supposed personal illumination, independent or different from that grace which is equally offered to all. Whereas it is notorious how many eminent professors of modern philosophy are associated with the idea of a continual appeal to feelings and communications, of which no one but themselves can form any notion. This mode of defending unintelligible systems would not agree even with the modesty of the ancient sage, who refrains from speaking of the sign from the Deity which he supposed himself to have received ; adding, "It is not worth while to speak

* Plato, *Theætetus*.

† *Eumenid.* 420.

of what occurs to myself, for this has been vouchsafed to but few persons, or perhaps to no one else *."

St. Augustin interprets the ten lepers in the gospel to be "those who, not having the science of true faith, profess various doctrines of error; for they do not hide their ignorance, but bring it forward to light, as if it were the highest knowledge, and show it with boasting speech †." Much of that literature entitled philosophic, opposed to faith, would be rejected by the Father of the scholastics, as being not only the doctrines of error, but also as tending to involve the ideas of mankind in a confusion injurious to the light of the gospel. They could never be persuaded that the Almighty had left his creatures to be guided to truth by men who could not perhaps understand the meaning of their own sentences a year after they had written them. In ages of faith there was no such indistinctness in the intellectual world, but it was as on that first day when God divided the light from the darkness and imposed names on both: men could discern the light from the darkness. "Neither," says Lewis of Grenada, "ought we with vain labour to construct for ourselves a tower of Babel, in order to escape the flood of waters, when now by the wood of the cross the church proposes a means of sure salvation to us all." Men knew that there was more danger than profit in such philosophy. As St. Augustin says, '*Verba philosophorum excludit simplicitas Piscatorum.*' Therefore, not from speculators but from God, not in secular lyceums but in churches, not in inquiries and argumentation but in humble and assiduous prayer, did they seek for an increase of wisdom. As St. Ambrose says, '*Not by dialectics did it please God to save his people; the kingdom of God is in the simplicity of faith, not in contentions of speech.*' In fact, we may apply to the state of philosophy in ages of faith, as contrasted with its present condition, what St. Augustin says of Greece in the time of Thales and the seven wise men: "*Nondum efferbuerat ac pullulaverat philosophorum subtilis et acuta loquacitas ‡.*" For though the writings of the schoolmen are voluminous, and their ratiocination un-

* Plato de Repub. lib. vi.

† Hom. lib. ii. Quæst. Evang. c. 40.

‡ De Civ. Dei, xviii. 24.

wearied and acute, the grand points of their philosophy, and all that gave it real importance in their own estimation, were expressed by them in as few and as plain words as possible. The rest was an exercise of leisure, a recreation. Their essential doctrines, like the wisdom of the ancient philosophy, were, as we have already observed, all conveyed in short sentences—*ῥήματα βραχέα ἀξιολογούμενα ἐκάστω εἰρημένα* *. Moreover every thing was determined with them, even to the forms of expression; so that it was impossible to be misled by the terms they employed. St. Augustin says, “The philosophers use words as they choose, nor do they fear to offend religious ears; but for us, it is necessary to follow a certain rule in speaking, lest the license of words should beget an impious opinion concerning the things which they signify †.” Accordingly, we find Richard of St. Victor stopping himself on one occasion, and saying, “But, lest our words should seem to savour of human philosophy, or to depart from the plain and simple tenor of Catholic doctrine, it will be better to say as follows ‡,” and Guibert de Nogent, explaining the difference of his manner in historic and philosophic composition by the necessity of adhering to the same rule, saying, “In my history I have adopted a very different style from that of my expositions on Genesis; for a history may be crowned with more elaborate eloquence, but we must treat the mysteries of sacred things not with a poetic loquacity, but with ecclesiastical simplicity §.”

The immense intellectual advantage which resulted from this precision of the school has not been sufficiently remarked. The body needs the shelter of a thousand artificial limits from the bleak desert air of the wide earth, and so does the mind need shelter amidst the trackless wastes of speculation; it must have barriers erected for it, and even narrow close divisions, within which it can associate with others, to give it warmth and assistance, to protect it from being frozen or utterly dissipated and lost in wilds of abstraction.

* Plato, Protag.

† De Civit. Dei, lib. x. 23.

‡ De Contemplatione, p. i. lib. i. c. 5.

§ Guibert de Novigent. Epist. ad Lisiard. Suessionens. Episcop. Gesta Dei per Francos.

We may observe, here, that in consequence of the same discipline, from the men themselves as well as from their writings all whimsical eccentricity was removed. Their whole character was complete, and in unison; it showed nothing singular, nothing extravagant, but the sweet and beautiful proportions of sound and perfect nature. Witness Hugo of St. Victor—of vast capacity, quick intelligence, tenacious memory, eloquent tongue, graceful speech, and persuasive manner; effective in work, gracious in conversation, the most gentle and humane of men.

That some of the scholastic philosophers may have exercised their subtilty in vain and frivolous disquisitions, is a fact which no one denies. Sufficient pains are taken to remind us of it; for “the wise man’s folly is anatomized even by the squandering glances of the fool;” but that they were never left without a warning voice from their contemporaries, and that they needed not the light of modern times to discern the danger and absurdity of such studies, is a fact no less true; in proof of which might be produced innumerable passages of which modern writers leave their readers in ignorance. On philosophic grounds they were admonished. “Neither does the genius of man deserve approbation,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “for applying pertinaciously to things which are difficult, but rather for discerning prudently those things which are to be known*.” But still more on religious grounds was the danger denounced. “The ecclesiastical discipline,” says St. Jerome, “if it even admitted these subtilties, ought to disguise and avoid them, as it does not speak to a few disciples in the idle schools of philosophers, but to the universal race of men†.”

When the spirit of controversy enticed the masters of the school into questions foreign from faith and Christian morals, into researches of mere curiosity, frivolous hypotheses, or disputes of words, the whole episcopal order and the brightest luminaries of the school came forward to announce the danger‡. The consequences, indeed, had been clearly seen in Roscelin of Compiegne,

* De Sacram. lib. i. p. vi. c. 2.

† Epist. xxxi.

‡ Berthier, Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles XII. XIII. et XIV.

Gilbert de la Poirée, Peter Abailard, and Amauri de Bene. Then, above all, was the voice of the Holy See heard.

Pope Gregory IX. wrote to the doctors of Paris in these terms:—"We order and enjoin you rigorously to teach pure theology, without any mixture of worldly science—not to alter the word of God by the vain imaginations of philosophers—to hold yourselves within the bounds placed by the Fathers—to fill the minds of your hearers with the knowledge of ecclesiastical truths—and to make them draw from the fountains of the Saviour." The abuse against which this was directed had been feelingly lamented by holy men in all ages, for the pride of reason is of all ages.

Let us hear Peter the Venerable, or Henricus de Palma:—"The ways of Sion lament, because there is no one who goes to the solemnity; and these words of the prophet may be used in reference to the captivity of souls, and to the ways which lead to God, and to the spiritual Jerusalem; which ways may be said to lament because there is no one to follow them; while multitudes, casting off the pursuit of true wisdom, entangle themselves with useless curiosities; and many men of famous reputation, omitting the right worship of the Creator, serve manufactured idols—that is to say, instead of pursuing true interior wisdom, by which God alone is adored, they fill their minds with different sciences, and fabricated inventions of multitudinous arguments, as if with certain idols; and with these their mind is so possessed, that true wisdom can find no place in them. But God did not create the soul to this end, that against its own generosity it should be filled with a multitude of sheep-skins, but that it might be the seat of wisdom, and that the pacific King of the supernal city, the highest God, might reside in it; for this wisdom, which is called mystical theology, is taught by St. Paul the Apostle; and it is identical with the extension of the love of God, and it incomparably excels the science of all creatures as far as the east is from the west; for the sciences of the world doctors teach, but this is taught by God immediately, and not by any mortal man: this by divine illuminations and distillations is written in the heart, but that is inscribed on the skin with a quill; and this says sufficit, for the soul

finds rest in the fountain of goodness and beatitude, but the other never says it is enough; for there is no end to the labours of vanity. Therefore, leaving human wisdom, and the useless curiosity of science, and the bonds of arguments and opinions, the religious soul, by the ascent of love, mounts with desire to the fountain of all things in which alone it can find truth; and as God alone can teach this, it follows that any layman whatever in the school of God may receive this wisdom, which no philosopher and no secular master could ever impart to him *."

"It is permitted us in our republic," as Clemens Alexandrinus saith, "to philosophize without a knowledge of letters, whether we be barbarians or Greeks, though we be slaves, old men, boys, or women; for we are all of the same nature, and capable of the same virtue†," and the church, in the Prose of Pentecost, as if with an especial view to remind us of this, invoking the Holy Spirit, teaches that the Father of the poor is the light of hearts. The instruction of the poor and ignorant was the holiest office of those who spoke wisdom among the perfect. "The intelligence of truth," says Richard of St. Victor, "we receive for our own profit, but the doctrine of truth for the advantage of others †."

It is this communion with persons who have no pretensions to the character of extraordinary learning and ability, that renders the Catholic philosophy so despicable in the eyes of many. A society which is ready to impart to peasants and domestics the same instruction as to philosophers, can have no charms for the numerous class of men endowed with the sophistic character. O what poor wretches their fellow-creatures seem to them, in their commonplaceness, who yet all, as the patient children and drudges of mother earth, are wiser and better than they! To win their hearts there must be a system which persons in the ordinary walks of life have no time to learn, which minds without the habit of long study cannot comprehend, a phraseology, too, which none can use but those who have made themselves familiar with the most abstruse metaphysicians. The delight-

* *Mystica Theologia Prolog.* † *Stromat. lib. iv. c. 8.*

‡ *De Erudit. Hom. Inter. lib. i. p. i. 19.*

ful simplicity of truth, which had such charms for the philosophers of the middle ages, provokes the suspicions or disdain of all such men; and they reject the Catholic rule precisely because it fulfils the divine prophecy, that a fool should not err therein. It cannot be, they seem to think, that God should employ such a plain and obvious method for deciding controversies and preserving unity as authority. Of what avail, then, would be all their investigations and knowledge of languages, and cultivation of their genius? If it were so, their own servant, yea, the Irish peasant, would be as competent to find truth as themselves. "The rule of the church is too uniform," they say: "it can be applied by men of insufficient capacity, as well as by the skilful*." With such a rule the church can never please them; and so they continue to reject every idea but what is misty and intricate; while men of profound Catholic views can have no chance of obtaining a hearing, unless they come before them in the capacity of buffoons, to hazard the expression of their conviction as a jest. Like Cinesias, they take their exordium from the clouds; for they instinctively know, like him, that their whole art hangs from them. Their words are all aerial, dark as night, and buoyant as the vapour of the sky; so that they seem to move with every wind†. It is the same disposition which renders them, in questions of history, resolute in rejecting facts, in order to substitute some speculation, which is the farthest possible removed from every thing plain and obvious. Thus they affirm that the religious revolution in England was brought about by causes quite foreign from any of those usually assigned for it; and instead of hearing the evidence of historians respecting Henry's filthy doings, and what the nobles of his bastard daughter worked with their adulterate money on the Thames, they invite their readers to contemplate the beauty of some pure abstraction, or "the blessed security which resulted from the circumstance that self-willed monarchs and politicians moved the secret wires of the spiritual machine." "The apparent subordination of doctrine to politics in our Reformation," says a recent author, "was a manifest token that a divine hand was at work in it." Any thing tangible in the sphere of reli-

* Lettres à un Berlinois, par M. Lerminier.

† Aves, 1385.

gion seems alike repugnant to them; so that they will have the rock on which the church was built to have been not Peter, but the faith of Peter, or the confession of Peter; or, if it were Peter, the privilege, they say, was not to pass to his successors: in such haste are they to dissolve what they cannot deny existed. The universal consent of ages past to the sanctity of canonized men is precisely a motive to induce them to call it in question; and they will rather take the side of those who persecuted them, and envy Cardan for having written a panegyric upon Nero. Indeed, after reading some of their writings, one can hardly conceive that they speak their real sentiments; but it would seem as if they disputed merely in order to exercise their ingenuity with the difficulty of the matter—like Polycrates, when he praised Busiris and Clytemnestra, and made a discourse against Socrates. Yet are there not wanting philosophers, at present, to show, independent of the error in religion, the folly as well as ingratitude of such views. “A criterion of true philosophy,” says Novalis, “is communicability: it must be a thing that can be communicated*.” Even in the order of the sciences the most important truths are not those involved in greatest obscurity.” The same author remarks, “that the highest and purest mathematics is the commonest and most intelligible. Elementary geometry is higher than the more advanced geometry. The more difficult and intricate a knowledge becomes, so much the more is it delusive, impure, and mixed†.” “An intricate terminology,” says Frederick Schlegel, “and a complete unintelligibility, are the constant attendants and peculiar signs of the false philosophy which supposes that it can find the treasures of truth and real knowledge in an ever wider separation between consciousness and the faculty of thought, and in an ever higher and more naked abstraction. But as often as men seek to raise up a real building of true knowledge by means of this clear abstraction, as it is called, this empty thought separated from life and from all living reality, they repeat again the old history of the tower of Babel and of the confusion of tongues. Every new system of art is now a new cutting off and addition to that original confusion of languages. Every one of these

* Schriften, ii.

† Id. 172.

builders of endless error begins by throwing down what had been built by his predecessors ; and while he grounds the imaginary tower of his own private knowledge upon the empty space which he has been clearing away, he firmly resolves to build still higher than any one has ever done before. But no one understands the other, any more than himself ; so that this new confusion of ideas becomes ever more and more intricate and dark, till at last nothing is left but some incomprehensible heaps of broken thoughts, which are what they always were, only some dead stones, some unintelligible abstractions. A more living philosophy can never choose and follow this way of abstraction ; it proceeds from life, and from the feelings of life, and from consciousness *." Now clearly such was the Catholic philosophy, felt by the people, explained and confirmed by the scholastics. What author was ever more remarkable for a clear comprehensiveness, for admirable good sense, for unerring soundness of judgment, than St. Thomas ? Even modern writers, who object to what they term the scholastic rind, affirm that, if his thoughts were expressed in another form, he would be the most popular of all writers ; " he is," they add, " so eminent for truth and justice †." They cannot avoid regarding him as a man of vigorous, practical understanding, disdaining any rhetorical arts beyond what sufficed for expressing plain sense in clear words. Who more averse to indistinctness ?

How often might one address the Angel of the school in the words of Adam, to the Angel of Paradise ; " How fully hast thou satisfied me, freed from intricacies, taught to live—

" The easiest way ; nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life : from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us : unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts and notions vain."

But if the philosophy of the clean of heart, beholding God, was thus delivered from the clouds of obscurity which enshroud the mind unpurified, if it was free and common for all, even as broad and liberal as the blessed

* Philosophie der Sprache, 20.

† Michelit.

air and light of heaven, it was not, therefore, without glorious colours and refractions, or void of those deep, ineffable mysteries which give rest, by exciting love and wonder, to the intelligence of man.

“What is this sweet voice which sounds in my ears?” exclaims the youth, after the senior has spoken in the dialogue by the blessed Denis the Carthusian; and such words are the natural expression of a mind that hears, for the first time, the language of Catholic philosophy, conveying heavenly truths to man in tones of love. “Beautiful, indeed, are the words and promises which you propose to us,” used to be the reply of the heathens to the holy missionaries of the middle ages, as Venerable Bede testifies*. To them a voice arose, solemn and sweet as when low winds attune the midnight pines: in fact they brought to them what that great Catholic philosopher Marsilius Ficinus terms “a divine music, namely, a concord of thoughts, words, and actions.—*Divina musica est rectus cogitationum, verborum actionumque concentus*†.” Such was the philosophy of the clean of heart; the result of whose kind and gentle words, accompanied with joyous semblance, was to leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies.

“What ought to be done?” asks Plato, after showing that the studies of young men are pursued with a view to profit, and that in later life they despise all philosophy—“The very reverse of what prevails,” is the reply. “For while young, and even in first youth, they should apply to a philosophy accordant with youth, *φιλοσοφίαν μειρακιώδη*, exercising their bodies while they are in flower, that they may possess wherewithal to minister to philosophy: but as they advance in age, and their soul comes to perfection, they ought to cultivate the exercises which pertain to the soul; but when strength fails, and they are no longer capable of exertion, they should be turned out loose like the animals that graze round the temples‡.” From this passage one might infer that Plato would have found his ideal of philoso-

* Beda Ven. an. i. 25.

† Epist. lib. i.

‡ De Repub. lib. vi.

phic culture realized in the middle ages, and diametrically opposed in the later schools, which produced young men without youth, and old men without dignity. The ancient poet represents an aged, avaricious father laughing at his son for having antiquated notions. Youth and ancient sentiments seemed associated in his mind, saying “ὅτι παιδάριον εἶ καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαῖκά *.” So it was in ages of faith. The boy was not then taught to forget his nature, and consigned over to those frigid pursuits, which contract the mind; but he was initiated in the ancient and holy mysteries of that love which expands the heart and illuminates the intelligence. By solemn vision, and bright, holy offices, his infancy was nurtured. Every sight and sound, from the beauteous choir, sent to his heart its choicest impulses. The fountains of divine philosophy fled not his thirsting lips: and all of great, or good, or lovely, which the sacred past in truth or symbol consecrates, he felt and knew. Nor did the studies of mature age efface these early impressions. As the love of poetry was not superseded by a belief in allegory, which only began in the fifteenth century, when it was absurdly used to interpret the *Æneid* and the *Divina Commedia* †, so the love of truth was not confounded with a desire of abstract knowledge. Positive theology itself was concerned with the beautiful, and imparted to man a perception of many harmonies in the whole scheme of our redemption, which filled the soul with exquisite delight: “There are also many other things,” says St. Anselm, “which, when studiously considered, display a certain ineffable beauty in the manner of procuring our redemption ‡.” This Dante felt, and, in the seventh song of *Paradise*, he introduces Beatrice solving his doubts, and quenching his thirst with drops of sweetness. “Nor ought,” she says of this mystery, “so vast or so magnificent, either for him who gave or who received, between the last night and the primal day, was or can be.” Delight was sure to flow from every study in connexion with theology, for it was with wisdom, in general, as in the human body, of which you know not whether each part was created

* Nubes, 767.

† Heeren *Gesch. der Class. lit. im Mittelalter*, ii. 325.

‡ *Cur Deus Homo*, lib. i. 3.

for the sake of use, or for that of beauty. “*Certe enim,*” adds St. Augustin, “*nihil creatum videmus in corpore utilitatis causa quod non habeat etiam decoris locum* *.”

“Philosophy sounds like poetry,” says Novalis. One can easily understand such an impression, after sitting for the first time in Catholic schools : but what does the voice which succeeded it in nations, directed by the new religious guides, sound like ? At least there is no great danger of the young mistaking it for a source of musical delight : indeed, if the thoughts of such men had grown harmonious, the world might have shortly looked for discord in the spheres. In effect, as this philosopher observes, “All evil is isolated and isolatizing : it is the principle of separation, contradiction, disorder—of all prosaic dulness, frigidity, and gloom. Falsehood, in particular, is confined and monotonous, cold and declamatory ; while truth is broad, and infinitely diversified, inflamed, possessed of endless powers of assimilation, and, at the same time, mystical and unobtrusive.

The tendency of the public mind, where faith has perished, is towards sameness and dissension, whereas, in the middle ages, it was towards variety and union ; of which a type might be seen in that symbolic branch of fire, used in the celebration of the Paschal solemnities, which, as the church sings, although divided into parts, yet knows no diminution of light. In order to heal jealousies and lull contention, the best remedy, proposed by our wise men, is to abolish all the institutions and forms which Catholicity produced, in order that there should be no diversity discoverable on any side ; whereas, under the influence of that philosophy, which is only another word for the Spirit of God, men knew how to establish and perpetuate variety by love ; and instead of acts of uniformity we find only charters of foundation.

Philosophy was then in thought, what poetry was in feeling. Religious learning was scientific poetry : in short, most of what Novalis delivers as a speculation was then realized ; as we may still witness in those dulcet lays, those philosophic epistles, those religious histories, those profound treatises, “which, as long as of our faith the fervour does not fade, shall make us love

* De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. 24.

the very ink that traced them." Indeed, he remarks this himself: "The general expressions of the scholastic philosophy," saith he, "have a great resemblance to numbers; hence their mystic usage, their personification, their musical charm, their infinite combinations. All realities created out of nothing, such as numbers, and abstract expressions, have a marvellous relationship to things of another world, to an infinite series of strange combinations and relations, as if it were to a poetic, mathematical, and abstract world*." It is often a subject of surprise, that almost every eminent man of those ages should have been denominated, as was Baptist the Mantuan, a poet, a philosopher, and theologian; and this might lead us to reflect upon the divine virtue of that wisdom which, in such multitudinous excellence, is imparted to the clean of heart.

The Catholic religion makes men naturally unimagi-
native think and do what poets utter in divinest strains. All that are with Peter's chair instinctively promote the charms of life, for by their very principles they are bound to protect them. I have often wondered to hear of long grown-up, dull, prosaic persons, resisting unfeeling sophists for a cause that seemed one of children, of youthful fancy—a cause of flowers and of poetry—a cause of the sweet wild pleasures, that hold the innocent fresh heart in a maze of delicious enchantment. How came they to feel an interest in it? the young will at times naturally ask: the fact is, that simple obedience compels them to act thus; so true is it, that children instinctively know more of God, than world-worn men. There is reality in the things which delight the young, in so much that the savages, who would take them away, would, with the same brutal violence and callous insensibility, strip the church of what essentially belongs to her: they would, with the same false cunning, cavil at her doctrine. Such is the secret harmony which must prevail—the mystic law, which cannot be reversed. Nothing can prevent the defence of truth, from being also the defence of poesy—the apology of faith, from being also the apology of the young.

All these countless and indefinite aspirations of the heart, which pass under the name of sentiment, these

* *Schriften*, ii. 171.

fair, and glorious, and solemn forms which float before the imagination in the grandest moments, these wreaths of flowers, these mossy cells, these forest depths, this indistinct delicious music of the inmost soul—all are placed under the safeguard of religion, and must be defended with authority ; so that, when the barbarian race tries to rob us of them, we have only to turn our eyes to the supreme Pontiff, and cry, like the suppliants of yore, *Roma, Roma !*

We had occasion to remark, in the Fifth Book, in what a deep and wondrous manner the ritual of the Catholic church harmonized with our whole nature. In these ceremonies there was to be found, besides the theological sense, much aspersion of philosophy : they were, in fact, truths embodied, and so presented, in substantial form, to the understanding. In many parts of it, you can mark some cunning artifice, to excite and kindle the sentiments of our poor humanity, as when the pillow of the dead man is placed upon his coffin, during the mass of burial : so that the feelings which, in the modern society, are often exclusively suffered to develop themselves through the infected and pestiferous medium of a novel, were, under the Catholic influence, cultivated and expressed through the pure, and noble, and sanctifying forms of religious worship. This was the result of a conviction which deep reflection has imparted to later philosophers, that “it is sentiment which puts the fire as it were to our ideas, and draws us out from the aridity of abstraction, that reason produces but a weak will, often at the mercy of the least obstacle, and that reason must sometimes be converted into a passion to become active *.”

According to the school, the use of the imagination extends to the highest and most spiritual inspirations of man. “Without doubt,” says Richard of St. Victor, “the sense of the flesh precedes the sense of the heart in knowing things ; because, unless the mind first should take sensible things by the corporeal sense, it would never find what it could think respecting them. But perhaps it is not wonderful if the bodily sense should lead the sense of the heart to a place whither itself can never come : but it is strange, in what manner it should

* Alibert, *Physiologie des Passions*, tom. 1.

lead it thither, when it cannot ascend itself. The corporeal sense does not take incorporeal things, to which nevertheless, without its guidance by the hand, reason doth not ascend. Certes, if man had not sinned, in the knowledge of things, the exterior sense would assist the interior; for who denies that Adam received Eve in order to be his assistant? But it is one thing to have a companion, and another a guide of one's journey. And since Eve drew away her husband, against the counsel or precept of God, to follow her counsel, Adam, as a punishment of his prevarication, is so weakened, that now he is obliged of necessity to follow her. Nevertheless, from the guidance of his assistant, not only he need not be confounded, but he may also glory, when, by that intervention, the use of corporeal similitudes leads him to the contemplation of things invisible *."

The philosophy of the clean of heart contained the secret of sanctifying passion, of sanctifying all the countless unutterable affections and desires that are incident to the human mind. It showed how little reason had sense to fear the Creator, who made the earth and its creatures so beautiful to the senses—how little cause there was for distrust, in loving whatever was his workmanship, such as their natural loveliness and innocence, when that exquisite grace of form and colours had been so evidently contrived by his intelligence, and imparted by his hand. In another way too did scholastic science come to the aid of the devout mind, when perplexed with the consideration of the two-fold tendencies of flesh and spirit; for in its moments of discouragement, when distrust arose, and a scientific doubt suggested that the very rapture which it was enjoying might, after all, be only a deception of the senses, and darkness of the flesh, reason was brought to the rescue, and, from that moment, the victory to the clean of heart was complete: for reason herself, when enlightened by faith, assured them that the extasy was not the less divine and spiritual because the senses had been instrumental in exciting it. Such an employment of their power was according to the ordinance of God, and subservient to the angelic ministry which watched over it. "Who is that queen of the south," asks Richard of St. Victor, "who comes to hear

* Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, pass. ii. c 17.

the wisdom of Solomon—that inhabitant of the warm regions inflamed with a desire of truth? Who, I say, is that queen, but a holy soul, valiantly presiding over the senses and appetites of the flesh, over the thoughts and affections of the mind, glowing with love of the highest King and ardent with a longing to behold him *.”

“It must be laid down,” says the Angel of the school, “that the use of reason requires a due use of the imagination and of the other sensitive faculties, which are exercised by a corporeal organ †;” and again, “those in whom the imaginative, cogitative, and recollective power is best disposed, are the best disposed for intelligence ‡;” a truth which we may verify by every day’s experience, for these unimaginative persons, such inveterate scorers of fancy, while so quick and sure to act from passion, seem always incapable of acting from an idea; they are creatures of blind habit, in the slavery of which ends their pure light of reason.

With these views of the Catholic school the most judicious philosophers of modern times are now agreed. “Our imaginative and poetic feelings,” says one of them, “are as much a part of ourselves, as our limbs and our organs of sense. They are so woven into our nature that they mingle themselves with almost every word and deed. For a metaphysician to discard these powers from his system, is to shut his eyes to the loftiest qualities of the soul, and is as unaccountable as it would be for a physiologist to overlook the very integuments of our animal frame. It is by the imagination, more perhaps than by any other faculty of the soul, that man is raised above the condition of a beast. Beasts have senses, and to a certain extent also they possess, I think, the powers of abstraction, though this is denied by Locke; but of the imaginative powers they offer perhaps no single trace. These high attributes of the soul confer on it a creative energy—aid it even in its generalizations from pure reason—bring before it vivid images of the past, and glowing anticipations of the future—teach it to link together material and immaterial things—to mount up from earth to heaven. As a matter of fact, men do possess imaginative powers, and ever have delighted,

* De Contemplat. i. v. c. 12. † S. Thom. 1. q. xxxiii. art. 3.

‡ 1. q. lxxxv. art. 7.

and ever will delight in their exercise; and to exclude them from a system of psychology, is to mutilate and not to analyse the faculties of the soul. They may have been abused, but what of that? Every faculty has been abused and turned to evil*.” To the same effect, speaks Frederick Schlegel: “fancy is fruitful; it is the inventive and peculiarly creative power of man, but it is blind, and often deceitful. Not in a similar way productive is reason, the power of reflection, the inward rule of customary proportions in his life; for to be really productive and to bring forth truth, it cannot succeed with all its reasoning, or if it should produce any thing, as in false philosophy, or in the mere rational system, it will be something dead-born, empty intellectual phantoms of pure nothing. Reason is but one half of the soul, and fancy is the other half. In love alone is the soul wholly and perfectly reunited in one full consciousness†.” What a beautiful summary of the Catholic philosophy in a peasant or a sage! in whom the charity of faith sanctifies every thought and faculty of his being? We are told by the moderns that it was a gross system, rising out of the sensuality of man, and recommending itself only to the imagination of the people: they would persuade us that the schoolmen never saw the pure light of reason. But, such assertions merit little attention even on the ground of a novelty; for when the vulgar derided the seven wise men of Greece, Thales and the rest—they used to call them poets. True, the schoolmen were poets, and the ages of faith were imaginative ages; but not the less were they united in a mystic and wondrous union of intelligence with truth. It is a poor boast of later generations that they have first beheld the empire of reason‡, when that domination implies the annihilation of one half of the soul, and of the great cementing power, which held the former parts in union.

Alluding to this deep feeling, this power of appreciating the wonderful and wild, a German philosopher observes, “that we have not learned sufficiently to appreciate the beauty of life in the middle ages, and that a consideration of its fresh youthful energy, with its rich

* Sedgwick on the Studies of the University, p. 50.

† Philosophie der Sprache, 31.

‡ Antichità Romantiche d'Italia, Epoc. 11. 192.

religious imagination, might alone convert us to the opinion of Herder, that it would have been well for us to have lived then *." There is no surrender of sober judgment in having such views.

We have before seen what an immeasurable importance was ascribed to reason by the scholastic philosophers, and we may feel assured now, that if they use the imagination also, it is not to give it an undivided empire. "All these things are beautiful," says St. Anselm, "and are to be received as if a picture; but if there be not any thing solid on which they may rest, they will not seem sufficient to infidels; for he who wishes to make a picture chooses something solid on which to paint, in order that his painting may endure, for no one paints on water or on air. Therefore, when we show to infidels these conveniences of which you speak, as if pictures of a thing, and not the thing itself, they will suppose that we have only been painting on a cloud; therefore, we must shew first the solidity of this truth, and the proof that such things were †." The schoolmen were men of imagination? the moderns under the dominion of reason? Well, is this a fact so certain? Is it impossible that there should be a mistake here?

Speaking of Malebranche, the Viscount de Bonald says, "that Fontenelle supposed him to have a great deal of imagination in his philosophy. The most severe thinker that ever lived, who puts images only into his style, while his thoughts are purely the suggestions of reason, passed thus for a man of imagination, while Locke and Condillac, who, in a style continually abstract and without figure, thought only of images, who had only senses and sensations in their thoughts, passed for men who had conceptions; whereas, the truth was precisely in the contrary assertions. Malebranche was a man of conceptions, and Locke and Condillac men of imagination ‡."

Perhaps what induced so many to suppose that the scholastic philosophy was imaginative to the neglect of solidity, was the indefinite and incomplete character which it presented, under many points of view; but an attentive consideration of the causes which produced this effect,

* Liebner Hugo von St. Victor und die Theolog. Richtungen Seiner Zeit. 240.

† Cur Deus Homo, c. 4.

‡ Legislation Primitive, i. 91.

would lead perhaps to a different conclusion. It is true the schoolman and the mystic appears sometimes in his writing, as one who goes, yet where he tends knows not; but the modern critics who censure him, should remark with Novalis, that "order and definition alone do not constitute clearness, and that there is often more fullness as well as progressive capacity in men of intricate minds*." The models of classic composition cannot be urged against them, for it was the grammarians of the lower empire who divided the ancient writings into books and parts, and who thought they had done great things in distributing the narrative of Livy into Decades. The scholastic and mystic books, where most they seem indefinite, correspond with our souls, in which feeling and thought, as Tick says, "come like wave upon wave; one thought being cast out by another. Our feelings are only felt as they shift and pass—our delight merely gushes through us, one moment it entrances us, the next it has vanished." Hence St. Augustin complains, that he is always displeased with his own words, as he is greedy of something better, which he often interiorly enjoys before he begins to explain it; and when his words fail to express it, he is afflicted, for his tongue does not suffice to his heart. "All that I understand," he adds, "I wish that he who hears me may understand, and I perceive that I do not speak so as to succeed in this, chiefly, because the intelligence, like a rapid coruscation, flashes through the soul, whereas speech is slow and long, and very dissimilar; and while it revolves these things, the other has already buried itself in its secrets†."

In the mystic writings of the Catholic school, as poets say,

"Desires and adorations

Winged persuasions, and veil'd destinies,
 Splendors and glooms, and glimmering incarnations
 Of hopes and fears, and twilight phantasies,
 And sorrow, with her family of sighs
 And pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
 Of her own dying smile, instead of eyes,
 Came in slow pomp:—the moving pomp might seem
 Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream."

Of these grand conceptions the last part, as in a

* Schriften, ii. 228.

† De Cat. Rudibus.

tragedy, as in life too, you rarely find. Their's is an unfinished structure like so many of their grand cathedrals; but what sublimity in all that we can see, and what an exquisite harmony in the parts that are completed! While of wisdom and of justice speaking, amidst soft looks of pity, they dart a glance as keen as is the lightning's stroke, when it doth rive the knots of some ancestral oak. "Undoubtedly, they saw," as St. Anselm says, "that whatever they could say or know respecting the great truths of revelation, there were deeper reasons involved which still remained hidden from them*." They leave much indefinite, for they knew well that the things they had to deal with were indefinite, and that they could not fetter them in the language of a formal definition, without violating their nature.

This caused the different sects of heretics which had each partial view of some one or other favourite truth, to say in scripture language, that "their trumpet gave an uncertain sound;" and the charge was true as far as it only expressed their resolution to exaggerate nothing, and colour nothing, to frame no system out of disjointed members and isolated sentences. "Let our admiration be discreet," says Richard of St. Victor, "that in the foreknowledge and wisdom of God, we may admire nothing that is false. Let our congratulation be discreet, that we may venerate nothing vain in predestination, or the divine dispositions. Both are wonderful without the aid of falsehood—both are sweet without the condiment of vanity†." Although few, there are not wanting however some later writers, who have understood the real value of this forbearance.

"Some men wonder," says Marsilius Ficinus, "why we follow with such attention Plato, who always seems to be conversant with paradoxes and things marvellous‡." These could not have been men who had drunk deep of the Catholic philosophy, which presents a similar handle for accusations to the thoughtless vulgar. Probably their style of writing is another reason for denying the character of philosophy to some of their works. Men will not be persuaded to designate as philosophy a book, like that of which Picus of Mirandula

* *Cur Deus Homo*, 2. † *De Contemplatione*, P. i. lib. ii. c. 25.

‡ *Epist.* lib. I.

could say, "daily when fatigue and weariness come over me, I turn to it as if to retire into a garden, where I find such delight that nothing pleases me now more than to be again fatigued and weary, in order that a second time I may have the same recreation *." But when the subjects treated of partake of the beauty and grandeur which belong to all Catholic views, this character was a necessary consequence. How could a page be abstract when charity had held the pen? On the other hand, how could it be without food for the imagination, when treating upon spirit? A Bonaventura to men who object that his style is not on a level with humanity, might reply in the words of Æschylus to Euripides—

ἀνάγκη

Μεγάλων γνωμῶν καὶ ἱερανοῶν ἴσα καὶ τὰ ῥήματα τίκτειν.

Yes, closely allied to heaven-bred poesy must be the expression of Catholic truth.

Having considered the philosophy of the clean of heart, in relation to its humble, practical, popular, and poetic character, let us proceed to remark its Catholicity. Here was its grand prerogative, the consideration of which will require some delay. The aspirations of the human intelligence after the universal view, which the Creator from eternity destined for the beatitude of the clean of heart, can be discerned through all the philosophic literature of the ancient world. Parmenides, in his poems affirmed and proved, that all things belonged to unity, *ἐν εἶναι τὸ πᾶν*: and Zeno, as Socrates observed, seemed willing to express the same opinion, only in different words, asserting that there are not many things† "Since we are by nature most desirous of truth and wisdom, we should be directed," say the Pythagoræans, "to that science which is one, which in itself comprizes all things, and which is the sum of all contemplation ‡." Plato has no other idea of philosophy. "The multitude," he says, "can never attain to a conception of the beautiful, and not of many beautiful things; of the essence of all things, and not of many individual things: therefore it can never attain to philosophy §."

* Joan. Pic. Mir. Epist. lib. i. 23. † Plat. Parmen.

‡ Jamblich. Adhort. ad Philos. cap. 4.

§ Plat. de Repub. lib. vi.

“It is an ancient tradition of metaphysicians,” says Duns Scotus, “that in the foundation of nature nothing is distinct*.” The schoolmen were not unobservant of this. “The wisdom of God,” says Richard of St. Victor, “is simple and one, although it is distinguished by different words, that it may be more easily taken by us. It is circular, for in all ordinations of eternal wisdom the beginning agrees with the end†.” “Unity belongs to the reason of goodness,” says the angelic doctor, “all things desire unity, as goodness; and things only exist in as much as they are one. Whence we see that all things are repugnant to division, and that the dissolution of any thing arises always from its defect‡.” “The appetite for unity,” he says, “is the cause of pain. Every separation is opposed to unity. *Quid est aliud dolor, nisi quidam sensus divisionis, vel corruptionis impatiens?* For the good of every thing consists in a certain unity—so that every thing seeks unity, as goodness. Pain, therefore, is caused by the appetite for that unity in which consists the perfection of nature. The separation of hurtful things is desired in as much as they take away the desired unity; therefore it is the love of unity which inspires an appetite for effecting their separation§.”

The same thought breaks out occasionally in the philosophic writings of the moderns. Lord Bacon praises the speculation of Parmenides and Plato, but laments that it was only a speculation in them||. “All ideas,” says Fichte, “originally and essentially are one; it is only with reference to the objects upon which that one primary idea pours itself out, and in which it embodies itself within the sphere of our feelings and consciousness, that it breaks itself into a variety of forms, which several forms may themselves now be termed several ideas. An emanation from the one original idea, which employs itself in the constructing and reproducing the whole universe entirely out of itself, that is, by the processes of pure speculation is philosophy; for this has always formed the essence of philosophy whenever it has appeared among men, and will continue to form it for ever.”

* Lib. ii. Sent. Dist. iii. Q. 5.

† Ric. S. Vict. *Allegoriæ Tabernac.* Fœd.

‡ P. I. q. ciii. art. 3.

§ P. i. q. xxxvi. art. 4.

|| Advanc. of Learn.

Heresy, therefore, stands at once condemned, without consulting the ecclesiastical judge. It is in advance rejected by all philosophy. For what is heresy? It is a point of view, a rejection of the grand whole, the choosing of a part cut off. Hear how it is lately defined by one externally attached to it. "Their distinctive peculiarities resolve mainly into a sheer abuse of words; or into an arbitrary and unfounded preference of some over other parts of a complex system of truths; by which means propositions essentially true, being separated from those adjuncts which modify and explain their meaning, come to be, in effect, no better than falsehoods." Heretics answer precisely to that multitude described by Socrates, who are incapable of forming a general conception of things, *οὐ δυναμένων εἰς τὸ πᾶν αἰεὶ βλέπειν**. Open any of their writings and you will see immediately the truth of this observation, for never will you find one of them taking any but a partial narrow view.

When King Balak wanted Balaam to accuse and curse Israel, he said to him, "*Veni mecum in alterum locum, unde partem Israël videas, et totum videre non possis; inde maledicito ei*†." This is virtually the counsel of those who encourage one another to accuse the Catholic Church. The sum of their instruction amounts to nothing but this: "Come where you may see a part only, and not the whole; then you may curse it heartily." They look only on one side, which, when they have cut off from all the rest, and isolated, can of course present nothing complete. Hear, for example, what a very worthy writer has lately said respecting the monastic discipline:—"It is a narrow, unsocial, sour, selfish, pernicious spirit, which leads the ascetic to forsake his most obvious duties to bury himself in useless solitude. Cuthbert had to learn that his own personal holiness was attached to the discharge of the active duties." Reader, you observe what clouds are here. From taking only one point of view, he falls into the absurdity of concluding that men of a sour, selfish, pernicious spirit, who forsook their most obvious duties, and became useless, were able to inspire their contemporaries, who yet must be granted to have had common sense, with that love

* Plato, Theætetus.

† Num. xxiii.

and reverence which can only arise from a conviction of superior virtue.

Again, mere syllables detached have often blinded men to the vision of truth. "All heresies have sprung up," says John Picus of Mirandula, "from men attending not so much to the deep sense as to the outward bark of the words of the evangelists. Thus the letters major me est were fatal to Arius, donec peperit to Elvidius, ut abundaret delictum to Marcion, aliquando to Basilides, scriptum esse dii estis to Eanomius." Therefore Hilary says, "The interpretation of things said is to be derived from the causes of saying them: for things are not subservient to words, but words to things*." Heresy, therefore, it must be remembered, does not consist in pure error, but in a distorted and imperfect view of truth. According to St. Augustin, "All evil is good corrupted;" and the holy Doctor proceeds to say, "Nulla falsa doctrina est, quæ non aliqua vera intermisceat †."

Heretics will look but at a fragment of each Catholic doctrine, and then they logically conclude that it is not a whole truth. Hence the Valentinians used to call the Catholics "simple," attending only to their learned ignorance; the Montanists animal, discerning only their humanity and moderation; Vigilantius ash-collectors, or bone-keepers, remarking only the fact of their having relics in churches; Julian Galilæans, looking only to the country of their Founder; the modern sects Papists, Romanists, seeing nothing but their obedience to the supreme Pontiff and the See of Rome.

Cicero, to make man free, denies the foreknowledge of God. "But the Christian," says St. Augustin, "chooses both, confesses both, and by the faith of piety confirms both; for he will not allow that because God is certain of the order of causes, therefore man can have no free choice: this very choice is in the order of causes, which God foresees; for He who foresees the causes of all things cannot be ignorant of what our choice will be, since that choice is the cause of our actions ‡."

Lactantius remarks, that it would be easy to teach nearly all truth by collecting the opinions of the different sects of philosophers. "If any one," he says, "were to

* Apolog.

† Hom. lib. ii. Quæst. Ev. c. 40.

‡ De Civ. Dei, lib. v. 9.

gather them up and arrange them all into one body, he would not dissent from us. All truth, and the whole secret of divine religion, might thus be obtained*.” This is strictly true of the different sects which have been cut off from unity: there is not a single doctrine of the Catholic religion for which an advocate may not be found in some eminent disciple of one or other of these heresies; and it is curious, though painful, to hear them so pompously delivering a Catholic truth, imagining that its discovery is due to their own intelligence. Milton unconsciously bore witness to the fact, in the following remarkable words:—“Truth, indeed, came once into the world, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on. But after 1500 years arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down, gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, lords and commons, nor ever shall do,” he adds, indeed, “until her Master’s second coming:” but the blessed clean of heart were not the while left, among these sad seekers, to pick truth out of partialities; for they had followed not lords and commons, but that holy Mother who could bring together every joint and member, and could remould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection.

St. Augustin, commenting on the passage, “Jerusalem, which is built as a city whose participation is in itself,” demands, “What do we understand by this itself? What is this which is always the same, not at one time this and at another that, but which is in the same manner as he who said, ‘Ego sum qui sum?’ It is that of which we read, ‘Tu autem idem ipse es, et anni tui non deficient. Behold ‘itself,’ whose years do not fail! Brethren, do not our years daily fail? Already they have failed, and are about again to fail. No one has ‘itself’ from himself. Attend to this. The body hath it not, because it does not remain. It is changed by age, by alteration of

* Instit. vii. 17.

place and of seasons, by disease and infirmity. The celestial bodies remain not in themselves; they have mutations and operations to fulfil. The human soul itself does not stand; for with how many changes and cogitations is it varied? with how many pleasures, with how many cupidities, is it altered and torn? The mind itself of man, which is called rational, is mutable: it is not 'itself:' one time it wishes, another it wishes not; one time it knows, another it knows not; one time it remembers, another it forgets. Therefore no one has 'itself' from himself; it can only be had by turning to the true Lord, who is truly 'itself;' to whom it is said, '*Mutabis ea et mutabuntur, tu autem idem ipse es **.'" This, therefore, was had by turning to the Catholic Church, in which, during all ages, was the most complete and unchanging unity of doctrine. Savonarola, addressing the philosophers around him, adduces the fact of this permanent unity of belief, among such a series of innumerable intelligences, in proof of the truth of the Catholic religion. "In philosophy," he remarks, "there were as many opinions as heads; and if the wisest of them were unable to fix the intelligence of man, even in believing the few things which reason dictates and nature herself teaches, how much less could they have succeeded in regard to things surpassing reason? Whereas, in the church, we behold the intelligence and the affections of an infinite multitude of men attached as if with nails of iron to believing and loving things which wholly exceed the capacity of reason, and transmitting the same unchangeable doctrine to their posterity †." The eternal wisdom, which brings to pass all things in order, by appointed means, has left a provision for securing the unity of truth on earth, in the constitution of the church, which was to preserve it, analogous to that by which universal nature is governed and sustained. The primacy was therefore, as Pope Innocent III. remarked on the day of his consecration, attached to holy Peter's chair, by our Lord before his passion, when he said, "Thou art Peter;" during his passion, when he said, "Simon, Satan hath sought thee, but I have prayed for thee: when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;" and after his passion, when he said to him thrice, "Feed my

* Tractat. in Ps. 121.

† Triumph. Crucis, lib. ii. 3.

sheep *.” The church of Jerusalem, indeed, as the same pontiff remarks, in point of time might be styled the mother of all churches; but Rome was such, in point of dignity, as Andrew was called earlier than Peter, who yet was preferred before him †. So that, whoever departed from the doctrine of the Roman Church, to use the emphatic language of Savonarola, was known to depart from Christ ‡.

Let us hear those speak who first beheld the descent on earth of the city of God. “I think that no one would contest this position,” says St. Clement of Alexandria,—“that there is only one true church, which remounts to the apostolic time by means of its traditions, and to which all those belong who practise justice and virtue; for as there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ, it was proper that the church, that is to say, what is most venerable after God, should exhibit the great character of unity, since it has God himself for a model. The church, which is essentially one, ought then necessarily to be composed of elements of the same nature; and woe to the heretics who endeavour to make it lose this precious unity by dividing it! For us, we recognize only one ancient and Catholic church, which is one by its nature, by its principles, by its origin, by its excellence, which reunites all its children in the unity of one same faith §.” “Such,” says St. Irenæus, “are the instructions, such is the faith, which the Church has received; and although she is spread throughout the universe, she guards with care this precious treasure, as if she inhabited but one house; she professes each of these articles of faith with a perfect conformity, as if she had only one soul and one heart. Behold what it is she teaches, what it is she preaches, what it is she transmits by tradition, as if she had only one mouth and only one tongue ||!” Human power had nothing to do with the bond of this vast society; so that to all who belonged to it the Platonic words might have been justly addressed:—“O men, I consider you all as being relations, fellow-domestics, and citizens by nature, not by law; for like natures

* In Hurter, *Geschichte*, tom. iii. l. 93.

† *Id.* i. 283.

‡ *Triump. Crucis*, lib. iv. 6.

§ *Strom.* lib. vii.

|| *S. Irenæ advers. Hæres.* lib. i. 10.

are relations; but law, being the tyrant of men, forces many things contrary to nature*.”

We have heard the fact. Now let us attend to the mystery. “Matter,” says an illustrious historian, “desires dispersion, spirit desires unity; matter, essentially divisible, aspires to disunion and discord. Material unity is nonsense; in policy it is a tyranny. Spirit alone has the right to unite; alone it comprehends, it embraces, and, to say all in a word, it loves. Unity must exist by spirit, by the church; but, to give unity, the church itself must be one; then, in the material dispersion, the invisible unity of intelligences will appear—real unity, that of spirits and wills. Thus the feudal world contained, under the appearance of chaos, a real and powerful harmony; while the pompous delusion of the imperial unity contained only anarchy †.”

The philosophy of the ages of faith, emanating from that house upon the mountain to which were to come all nations, was not therefore local, as that of the school of Elea or Crotona, the Italic and Ionic (for the term *Romanos*, used by Engippius and other ancient writers to signify Catholics as opposed to Arians and other early sects, was merely an allusion to the supreme jurisdiction of Peter’s chair, mentioned by St. Irenæus)—or national, as that of the Indians and Egyptians, and according to the fancy of certain poets in modern times, who extol the revolution of the sixteenth century as being “the deliverance of national individualities ‡”—or confined to casts, as that of the Brahmins and Magi—or derived from any man, as that of Pythagoras, Zoroaster, or Solon. Heresies, ever trusting in some one or other individual of extraordinary eloquence, as in the most glorious mortal that ever existed, like an Arius, Faustus, or the apostate of Erfurt, all of whose unrivalled powers of discourse are attested by St. Epiphanius §, St. Augustin, and Belarmin, were even called from particular men, as from Arius, Valentinian, Marcion, and Basileidus ||. But all the great luminaries of the church were zodiacal, being

* Plato, Protagoras.

† Michelet, *Hist. de France*, tom. i. 433.

‡ Rosenkranz, *Geschichte der deutschen Poesie im Mittelalter*, 30. § Hæres. 69. || Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vii. 17.

successively swallowed up in the rays of the sun of justice. The one true ancient church was Catholic, universal as to place, common to all nations and to all races, and had God alone for its founder. Against its constant and unbroken chain of testimony nothing in the intellectual order could prevail—not a philosopher, if you will only credit Lord Bacon, who, after remarking that in latter times men who come in their own names are received, concludes that “the coming in a man’s own name, without regard of antiquity or paternity, is no good sign of truth, although it be joined with the fortune and success of an ‘Eam recipietis.’” The preacher might be learned, profound, eloquent, invested with dignity, ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ πρό γε τῆς ἀληθείας τιμητέος ἀνὴρ *—not a bishop; he might become a teacher of error. Nestorius was patriarch of Constantinople, the second see of the Christian world, and yet he became chief of a party. For no individual were men to abandon the unity of the church. St. Augustin says of the holy Fathers, “What they believed I believe; what they held I hold; what they taught I teach; what they preached I preach †;” and yet he says, “I do not receive what blessed Cyprien thought on one point, because this the church hath not received ‡.” Such was the language of Catholics in all ages. “The opinion of St. Thomas is nothing to the question,” says Picus of Mirandula, “because to depart from the opinion of Thomas is not to depart from faith; and there is often a difference of opinion among the Thomists concerning his opinion §.” Scotus, in the third of the Sentences, undermines the whole process of Anselm, in his book *Cur Deus Homo*. Scot and Thomas differ respecting the fall of St. Peter. “You cannot say,” he adds, “this contradicts Augustin, or Jerome, or Gregory, or some other father: therefore it is heretical; for although the writings of the holy doctors, without the canon of the Bible, are to be delivered and read with due reverence, nevertheless their sayings are not of such immovable authority that it is not lawful to contradict them, unless when the contrary is evidently and expressly proved or firmly determined by the church.”

Such was the doctrine of all Catholic theologians.

* Plato de Repub. vi.

† Lib. i. Cont. Jul. cap. 5.

‡ Lib. ii. c. 32.

§ Pic. Mir. Apol.

“Mark the sentence which excommunicates all heresy exalting itself against the Catholic faith : he does not say,” continues Melchior Canus, “error exalting itself against a bishop, against inquisitors, against theologians, whether of Paris or of Salamanca, Complutensia or Cologne, but against the Catholic faith.” The school gives great license, and permits one to defend whatever is probable ; so that what is contrary to the Scotists or Thomists is not necessarily an error, for it is only the authority of the sentences, in which all agree, constituting a principle of common faith which cannot be opposed without rashness. The axioms of the school are twofold : the one are chiefly concerned with philosophy ; the other with the faith and manners necessary for a Christian people. From the former men may freely differ ; from the latter to dissent is a danger which we would shun as poison. Still it is most certain, that whatever dogma is received by the whole school is held also by the universal church ; and there is no decree of the school which has not a certain origin, either in the sacred writings, or in apostolic tradition, or in the definitions of councils or pontiffs ; so that the placita of the schools cannot be denied without danger of the faith. The opinions of the school are a very different thing ; for these may be disputed or denied by any one, without impiety *.”

But the view of the blessed clean of heart was Catholic in a more profound sense than any in which we have as yet considered it. It was Catholic : therefore some would say, at one time, “it is a religion for the people,” at another, “it is a religion for kings”—one observer would remark its adaptation to the wants of the poor and ignorant ; another, its admirable fitness for the learned and thoughtful. Every object of nature and art, every part of the social state, even in countries where it was abjured, presented as it were a finger to point the way to it ; from all sides were avenues leading to it and centering in it ; and every man could enjoy it in connexion with the peculiar disposition, habits, wants, and desires of his own intellect. “Vere multiplex spiritus,” exclaims St. Bonaventura, “qui tam multipliciter filiis hominum inspiratur, ut non sit qui se abscondat a calore ejus †.”

* De Locis Theolog. lib. xii. 9.

† Medit. Vitæ Christi, c. xxxvi.

Hence among converts to the Catholic Church, were persons of every possible variety of character:—poets, metaphysicians, æconomists, historians, the imaginative, the positive, the lover of quiet, the lover of action, the artist, the mechanical philosopher, the sensitive, the phlegmatic, all come to her;—

“ ————— and all
Are blessed, even as their sign[†] descends
Deeper into the truth; wherein rest is
For every mind *.” —————

“The Catholic religion is Catholic,” says Bonald, “not in consequence of the universality of place, but of the necessity of principles. It is Catholic or general like geometric truths, which would not cease to be general truths though there were not to be a geometrician in the world;” and the reformed system, though it were extended over the universe, would only be a particular religion, a private opinion, a heresy[†]. This, according to Staudenmaier, constituted its essential character. “In it lies the highest principle, inasmuch as it includes all principles. One cannot say that it proceeds from any one point of view and follows any particular direction, for it is its property, in view of truth, to contain all points of view and to involve all directions ‡.”

Hence the great metaphysical power of the church, no less wondrous than its moral. It furnished the solution of all difficulties, and therefore should have received homage from the human intelligence, if it were only on the principle advanced by all philosophers, that the degree of confidence which a theory merits, is in proportion to the number of truths or phenomena of which it gives a reason: accordingly Savonarola concludes that the Catholic religion must be true, from the observation that it affords a solution for all objections, and that the more it is attacked the more its perfections are brought to light §. A philosopher, on embracing it, might with a peculiar sense exclaim, in the words of the Introit on the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, “Factus est Dominus protector meus, et eduxit me in latitudinem.” In

* Dante, Par. xxviii.

† Legislat. Prim.

‡ Johan Scotus, und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit i. 218.

§ Triump. Crucis, ii. 8.

fact, from that moment, every thing in art or nature seemed to offer itself to serve him. As the poet says, all things became slaves to his holy and heroic strain :

“ Earth, sea, and sky, the planets, life, and fame,
And fate, or whate’er else binds the world’s wondrous frame.”

The Catholic is he who, even on social and human grounds, according to Marsilius Ficinus, should be honoured by all, for he himself honours all ; he favours the good, extols the ingenuous, admires the learned, venerates the saints, and adores God in all *. Embracing the grand whole without break or interruption, the Catholic view was the most rational, the most complete in all its parts, or rather it was the only view which could satisfy reason throughout. Moreover it had something to correspond with all parts and faculties of human nature, and demanded no destruction to secure its action. Novalis might be well struck at this fact. “The Herrnhuters,” he says, “annihilate their reason, persons of susceptibility their penetration, persons of penetration their heart. No act is more common among men than the act of annihilation †.” The Catholic possessed that privilege which poets have so often longed for ;—he could embody and unbosom that which is most within him—could wreak his thoughts upon expression, and thus throw soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings strong or weak, all that he would have sought, and all he sought, bore, knew, felt, and yet breathed, into one word—and that one word faith.—Therefore he spoke with hope, while other men lived and died unheard, with a most voiceless thought.

The moderns love and see opposition, and a spirit of mutual destruction, where men of the middle ages loved and saw union. “It is not a little singular,” says a recent historian, “that while the Hibernians were the first teachers of scholastic theology in Europe, so an Hibernian, John Scot Erigena, himself unrivalled among the dialecticians of his day, should have been also the first to introduce into the arena the antagonist principle of mysticism :” than this, it would be hard to frame a more erring sentence ; and yet the profoundest writers of the modern discipline seem to experience the same difficulty which led to it. Albert Leibner, in his valu-

* Mars. Fic. Epist. lib. viii.

† Schriften, ii. 160.

able work on Hugo of St. Victor, speaks of the scholastic and mystic principles, as constituting two extremes in psychology: "How," he demands, "could a union of two such contradictory elements be possible *?" Nevertheless, he admits the fact that, according to the views of this philosopher, both were necessary for the perfection of the highest spiritual life, and that in his own mind the union had been realized. The logical school was concerned with truth, more immediately indeed, in relation to the intelligence, and the intuitive or mystic school was concerned with it more directly, in relation to love—but these were not antagonists, they were rather identical; or at least when one was wanting the Catholic type was not followed.

"*Tantum lucere vanum,*" says St. Bernard, "*tantum ardere parum: lucere et ardere perfectum.*"—Let us pause awhile to consider the union of beams in this undivided light. Mystic is derived from *μύω*, a word which, at one time gives the hollow sighing sound caused by closing the mouth and holding the lips together, which indicates that secrecy is a holy thing. St. Bonaventura says, that it is called mystic theology because it is closed or occult to all but those to whom it is revealed by God †. Some have said that mysticism is to be traced from the writings of Dionysius, and of Plato; but it is in general an error to suppose that any philosophy has been able to overcome the freedom of the human spirit; and it argues as little knowledge of mysticism to derive it from Plato, as it does of the scholastic philosophy to ascribe its invention to Aristotle. "In Christian contemplation," continues Staudenmaier, "and in the gnosis of St. John, must be sought the root of true mysticism. Mysticism is the scholastic of sentiment, and scholastic philosophy is the mysticism of the philosophic or speculative reason. They appear together, and are inseparably interwoven" St. Anselm says of the former, "*Qui non crediderit, non experietur; et qui expertus non fuerit, non intelliget ‡.*"

Truth can only be in totality. The whole can only be known rightly, when it is seized and understood on all its sides. The general is as important as the particular:

* P. 45.

† S. Bonav. *Mystica Theolog.* ad fin.

‡ *De Fide Trinit.* c. 2.

therefore the harmonious cultivation of the powers of the soul is the most wholesome, and the most joyful exercise; and by this, reason and feeling are both developed together, and united so as to form one spirit. Right reason does not therefore render cold the inspiration, nor will feeling so overwhelm the reason as to incapacitate it to discharge its functions—thought becomes truth, and feeling, life: both occupy the spirit, and are inseparable where truth is living, and life is true. The feeling strengthens its truth by means of thought, and thought its life, by feeling; but the spirit is one and the same in both.

It was thus in the middle ages. So the equilibrium remained ever constant; and in the mighty energy of men, who stood on one or other of these sides, was revealed the eternal energy of the one Christian spirit. The thinking mind was ever at the side of the holy life of feeling, and vice versa. This unity appears in all the great luminaries of the Church. At one time it was the endeavour of these men, through the faculty of thought, through scientific inquiry, in a word, through philosophy, to put down in an immense system the one great truth of the world, and of Christianity; and in this effort they worked as scholastics; at another their efforts were directed to bind themselves in the unity of their spirit with the divine Spirit, to make that unity the soul of their whole life, that inexhaustible holy fountain, from which springs the power of the ideal, the mighty life in godly ideas, and the highest inspiration—and in this they worked as mystics. The harmony of all powers and exertions consisted in this union and combination of all in one. Such was Scot Erigena in the ninth, Bonaventura, who in such a remarkable manner combined subtilty of dialectics and the deep interior power of mysticism, speculation, and contemplation, in the middle of the scholastic and mystic ages, and Gerson towards their close. Thus the scholastic Hugo of St. Victor was also a mystic philosopher, and the mystic Richard of St. Victor a scholastic philosopher. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas of Aquin, by their commentaries on St. Dionysius, and their love for that author, showed clearly that to them the mystic element was anything but foreign. Even St. Bernard, who came forward more as a mystic than as a scholastic, did nevertheless impart the same unity of direction to his efforts. And had not

Abailard evinced a rash spirit of speculation, the holy light of Clairvaux would never have appeared in opposition. Only the false scholastics did St. Bernard attack and not the true, with which his mysticism always was combined on the common ground of faith. So that, in short, when Gerson wrote a theory, in which religious speculations and mysticism were presented in close and inseparable union, he did nothing else but what the whole middle age had done before him*.

Another characteristic of the Catholic view, was the deep and practical conviction associated with it, arising out of the circumstance of its not being a selection at choice out of different opinions. "The idea of philosophy," says Novalis, "is a mysterious tradition. All eclectics are sceptics at the bottom, and the more they embrace, the more are they sceptical"—profound and lucid words!

We have already seen that Catholic philosophers could only confirm and illustrate the truths transmitted to them. Their wisdom, being Catholic, was traditional, and that it was so understood by them may be witnessed in the chronicle of Ademan, a monk of St. Eparchus, who brings down his history to the year 1028, and thus records the progress of the school: "Bede taught Simplicius, who taught Raban, who taught Alcuin, who taught Smaragdus, who taught Theodulf bishop of Orleans, who taught Helias, the Scot bishop of Angouleme, who taught Henricus, who left the monks Remi and Ucbald heirs of philosophy†."

Touron remarks how much wisdom St. Thomas derived from attending to the counsel. "Neglect not the narrative of seniors, for they learned from their fathers; since from them you will learn understanding, and in time of necessity you will give an answer‡." "Much avails human study," says the Angelic doctor, "when a man carefully, frequently, and reverently applies his mind to the testimony of his ancestors, not neglecting it through indolence, or despising it through pride§."

The ascetic writers themselves, were rather collectors and transmitters, than professed authors of thoughts.

* Joan Scot. Erig. und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. 478.

† Bulæus Hist. Univers. Paris, tom. i. ‡ Ec. viii. 14.

§ ii. 2. Q. 49. a. 3. ad. 2.

The Imitation, as Michelet remarks, was nothing but an abridgment of the ascetic writers of the middle age; there is nothing in it which cannot be found in former writings; it is only a judicious selection from them. Besides observing the natural consequences of the combination of intelligence, which could be discerned by the ancient poet, who said, "Nemo solus satis sapit," men were impressed with a conviction, in ages of faith, that an influence to kindle and illumine, far above any natural cause, prevailed within the pale of this unity. The *Væ soli* of the Scripture, are words to them full of mystic and divine wisdom, which would have been quite sufficient to show the fatal consequences of isolation, and the folly of those who would read "Happy those who stand alone."

"You are deceived, holy Thomas, you are deceived," says St. Bernard, "if you hope to see the Lord separated from the College of the Apostles. Truth does not love corners; bye paths do not please it. It stands in the midst; that is, it delights in common discipline, common life, common studies. How long then will you seek private consolations with such labour of self-will, and beg for them with such blushing *?" "Let them gnaw as much as they like," says Louis of Blois, "in their holes and corners, the dry bark of their errors: never will they be nourished with the grace of God unless they be within the splendid house of God, that is, in the Catholic church †."

Again, a great and most remarkable privilege, attached to the Catholic view, was the power which it imparted of detecting in an instant the true relation of things, and their ultimate consequences. The philosophy at present opposed to it, which offers nothing universal but the variations and anarchy of religious opinions, leaves its disciples without the means of finding their true position, or of being able to orient themselves, according to the expression of many languages. The Catholic religion, in an eminent degree, instructs its children in what Novalis terms "Socracy," which is the art of finding the point of truth out of any given place, and of determining the relation of that given place to truth ‡.

The gift of wisdom to the clean of heart, as Goerres

* S. Bern. in Ascensione Dom. Serm. vi.

† Epist. ad Florentium.

‡ Schriften, ii. 138.

remarks, is also the gift of all higher ideas, as far as relates to the use of knowledge, to the quickness with which the true nature of these ideas is discerned, to the power of seizing the whole depth of their contents, of understanding their mutual relation, of making clear their beginning and end, of holding them fast in their reciprocal positions, and of managing them in their movements*. Nor is this advantage confined to the sphere of intellectual exercise, for he who is taught by God and not by man, that is, he who hears the church and bows to her authority, sees and estimates all things of life and manners as they are, and not as they are called or estimated. Therefore, from the first instant, he knows the real worth of all that he comes in contact with:—genius, learning, rank, dignity, are all valued by him exactly according to their real worth, and not the least higher than God intended them to be. Hence the self-possession, the noble air of freedom and conscious equality, joined with the strictest respect to degree of every kind which characterises the Catholic. The reason of this was evident to the schoolmen; for as Duns Scotus says, “nothing is perfectly known, unless God be perfectly known; therefore nothing is simply known, unless He be simply known. As the first heat is the cause of heat in all other things, so is God the cause of knowing all other things, and therefore is He the first object of the intelligence†.” St. Clement of Alexandria says, that it is the property of this high wisdom to be able to distinguish the sophist from the philosopher, the rhetorician from the dialectician‡; and that truth, shining out as the sun, enables us to discern what is really true in the Greek philosophy, and to detect and convict all sophistical confidence of speech§. “Non literatus sed spiritualis omnia dijudicat,” says Hugo of St. Victor||. The Catholic, if faithful, is in fact this spiritual man who judges all things, and is himself judged of no one: a few moments’ conversation between him and other men, however his superiors in all other respects, will place this beyond doubt: and, in fact, how could it be otherwise?

* Die Christliche Mystic, ii. 195.

† Duns Scot. in lib. i. Sent. dist. iii. 9. 2, 3. ‡ Stromat. 1. 9.

§ Id. vi. 2.

|| Erud. Didasc. lib. vi. 4.

“True notions, not alone of history,” as Wagner says, “but of all things ordained for social life around us, are only possible from the Christian, that is Catholic point of view, in which we recognize the personal and holy God, as also the personal and free action of man*.” If we know not the object of Almighty God in creation, nor his will in the progress of the Church—history and the whole order of human life will be a sealed book.

The extraordinary predominance of vanity and worldly emulation in London, arises from there being no divine type kept ever present, by a daily office, in the minds of men, by which they could judge of their own motives and actions. The fancy of each man is his rule.

Euripides represents Æthra, the mother of Theseus, speaking of being in error as to the Gods dishonouring them, but thinking justly on all other subjects†. The boast is absurd, as even some heathen philosophers themselves would allow. “He who knows God,” says Staudenmaier, “knows in him all other things in their true condition: in this manner thought has become, by means of Christianity, much deeper, more true and intimate in relation to the heart. Its ideas are universal, as its consciousness is divine‡.”

From how many errors and absurdities would men have been delivered in their capacity of historians, metaphysicians, moralists, legislators, œconomists, and rulers, if they had been content to adhere to the great rule, never to condemn what the church has expressly sanctioned and approved, and never to approve of what she has condemned. Do you ask for a demonstration? Experience is the proof, and it is conclusive; for it is here that we see verified the remark of Lacordaire, that “God provides ingenious insults for the pride of man.” Hence it is that a conversation between a Catholic and a disciple of any other philosophy, is sure to terminate like one of Plato’s dialogues, when a Sophist has opposed Socrates—for the lame in the right course outstrips the swift, who has left the way. The issue might remind a looker on of what Socrates says, “that the meanest Lacedæmonian, though at first he would appear awkward in his language, would in course of conversation throw in, like a dexterous

* System der Ideal Philosophie, 97. † Suppl. 303.

‡ John Scotus Erig. und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. 1. 31.

lancer, some short and nervous remark, so as to make the other look no wiser than a child *." There could not be a happier image to describe the contest between a modern philosopher and a humble disciple of the Catholic church: for what was it which enabled the latter, starting up even in perversest times, to bind the scorpion falsehood with a wreath of ever-living flame, until the monster stung itself to death? It was the truth of pure lips contained in a few short plain words. The objections of men, who, if they had the power, would confound all unity on earth, can copiously and diffusely with choice words and grave sentences, be amplified and adorned; but they can never stand before the short logical and acute answers of the Catholic, who has learned well his catechism. He who hears the Church will not care for ten thousand words of men. The objectors are soon made to appear confused at their own objection, and to wear the countenance of Protagoras, when Socrates drew him to reply that he would call some things good, even though they were not useful to mankind. These professors of reformed notions too, can all make long speeches; but none of them are as clever or as bold as Protagoras, who pretended to be able in reply, to make short also to specific questions. He, indeed, would have shrunk from making proof of his ability, in that respect had not Socrates risen to depart, and all the hearers interposed to make him fulfil what he had engaged to do, when he declined absolutely relinquishing the mode of a lengthened harangue †. To combat each of the objections separately, would indeed be a long and wearisome task; but it was in the comprehensive glance at the grand whole, that lay the secret of the Catholic's power, as in those Grecian games which Pindar sung, where he who won the prize of the Pentathlon, which included the five games, might also boast of having carried off that of the Stadium ‡, because in the former the length and difficulties of each were considerably less than where each taken separately was made the trial; so in this contest, where the conviction of an adversary was the prize, one and the same conqueror might win the merit of having proved one point, though his demonstration of the whole system had previously rendered that one and every other certain. St. Francis

* Plato, Protag.

† Plato, Protag.

‡ Olymp. xiii.

Xavier was said by the Bonzes of Japan, to have had the power of removing by one word several different and even converse objections addressed to him at the same moment from all sides. Something of the same power may be said to belong to every one who defends the same cause; the cross is a universal answer, and the vast structure of Catholic wisdom is like that pyramid of the Egyptians, which was counted among the seven wonders of the earth, because receiving light on all sides, it did not obstruct it to any spot whatever, as it cast no shadow*.

But we should never finish were we to dwell upon all the advantages which resulted to the intellect from the Catholic faith. It made each person like many persons, a genius. "Every person," says Novalis, "is the germ of an infinite genius." Catholicism could develope it, and bring out from each many persons in harmony. The Catholic philosopher necessarily lived as it were in many places, and in many men.

Vox sermonum ejus ut vox multitudinis†. To him there was nothing peculiarly his own, and nothing foreign; all was at the same time his own and foreign: he knew how to appropriate to himself what was foreign, and to make foreign what was his own. "Let no one blame me," says Picus of Mirandula, "that I have been a guest in all schools, as if to whatever the tempest bore me; for I have always been accustomed to examine every kind of writing, esteeming it the sign of a narrow mind to confine one's self to any one porch or academy. In every family there is something remarkable, which is not common to it with others. There is in John Scot something vigorous, and full of force to overthrow—in Thomas, the solid and equable—in Ægidius, the terse and exact—in Francis, the strenuous and acute—in Albert, the ancient, ample, and magnificent—in Henry, as it seems to me always something sublime and worthy of veneration‡" Thus, in a strict and philosophic sense, was continually fulfilled the prayer of the Church, "*ut quod singuli obtulerunt ad majestatis tuæ honorem cunctis, proficiat ad salutem* §."

* Tacitus, An. i. 99.

† Dan. x. 6.

‡ Joan. Pic. Mirand. de Hominum Dignitate.

§ VII. Sund. after Pent.

According to Hugo of St. Victor, philosophy is to be extended to all acts of men, so that there are as many parts of philosophy as there are diversities of things. Thus Vincent of Beauvais notices expressly, that there is a philosophy of architecture*; and Michael Scot, in his division of philosophy, distinguishes that part which relates to the common acts of life; in fact, all which the Catholic philosopher did, said, and suffered, was whether with or without self consciousness, an artistic, scientific product, or operation; he spoke in epigrams, the maxims of the saints—he acted in a theatre, with angels and angelic men for audience—he held dialogues, even when the speakers were only within himself; for as language must be considered as thought rendered external and visible, so must thought be regarded as an internal language, and a continued conversation with one's self, and this in a sense so purely psychological, that we, ourselves, when we are alone, or think ourselves alone, are accustomed to think as if we were two persons, so as to feel that our inmost and deepest selves are really dramatic; and if this be the case with all men by mere nature, how much more so is it with him, who by grace and truth, has been enabled to recognise and hear distinctly the twofold action, and the double voice within his soul?

“Hence,” as Frederick Schlegel remarks, “the holy hermits of past ages, in the deserts, who have led a life of meditation on godly things, and mysteries, represented the result of their meditation as no other, desired to clothe it in no other garb, and to bring it into no other form of view than a conversation of their soul with God. He who enjoyed the Catholic view again was pregnant with histories and anecdotes, for he held by tradition. When he appeared, he appeared as an artist, as a musician: his life was a poem. In a word, he gave to every thing that he touched or did, a scientific ideal form.” To him a wide circle and a multiplicity of things were continually present, while his mind was as a tower, that firmly set, shakes not its top for any blast that blows. Thus was formed that true great presence of mind, which shone with such splendour in Sir Thomas More, and in myriads who resembled him through the long lapse of

* Spec. Doctrinale, lib. i. c. 15.

believing ages, making them kings of thought, lords of their oppressors, and natives of the world.

Hence we can understand the constant sleepless effort of men during ages of faith to Catholicise, that is, to arrange in the true order of the whole, to reduce to the ideal in which it exists in the eternal mind, every thing—politics, science, art—their ingenious endeavours to introduce the symbols of truth, amidst social forms, and to make religion enter into the detail of manners; for, as we remarked elsewhere, their leading thought appears to have been that the state and the family and the individual “ought each in its way to reflect the image of that order, and harmony by which they know the universe to be sustained and regulated.”

Hence the type of all things in their minds was Catholic, that is to say, alas, the converse of what it is now; hence, their resolution, not to look without the Church for truths which they possessed within it. Their conclusion being that of Tertullian, who says, “even though we were still and always to inquire, yet where should we inquire? is it with the heretics, where all things are extraneous and adverse to our faith, and to approach whom we are forbidden? What servant would seek nourishment from a stranger, not to say from an enemy of his master? What soldier would accept a donative and stipend from foreign, not to say hostile kings, unless he were a deserter and a rebel? *Nemo inde strui potest unde destruitur: nemo ab eo illuminatur a quo contenebratur. Quæramus ergo in nostro, et a nostris, et de nostro.**” And, in sooth, not to have been content with that limitation, if such a solecism can be excused, would have been the extreme of ignorance, for where could be truth or wisdom, if not in the Catholic philosophy, in the mind which looked at the grand whole?

Could it be with the sages of the ancient world, of whom the first and wisest professed to know this only, that he nothing knew? or, with those, who, under the pretence of a more sound religion, have in these latter times revived that old philosophy? Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead; ignorant of themselves, of God much more? But in times maligned, how successful

* *Lib. de Præscript. 12.*

were the efforts of the clean of heart, to keep their wisdom Catholic and pure. Under the Roman emperors, and in the old society of the world, the Pagan philosophy still left roots, and heresy was prompt to spring up as at first, in the time of the Apostles ; but in the middle ages there was nothing to interrupt the holy simplicity, the one great view.

Who must not admire this admirable composition of discipline, this incredible order of things? For what can be found either in nature, than which nothing is more full of exquisite adaptations, or in the works of men's hands, so compounded, so compact, and so cemented and jointed together? What is there last, which does not agree with what is first ; what is there that follows which does not answer to what went before? What one part is there not so interwoven with the other, that by the mere moving of a letter, all the rest must fall? Nor, indeed, is there so much as a letter that can be moved ; and then how grave, how magnificent, how constant became the very person of the Catholic? What consolations had they? what exhortations, yea, what admonitions and counsels written to the greatest men? All these qualities which the philosopher beautifully enumerates, as constituting the highest and noblest ideal of wisdom, were found united and infinitely extended here. Many good persons, I am aware, have never learned to see the admirable and glorious connection between their religion, and all that adds lustre and dignity to the present life of men, while others cannot be persuaded by any effort to look upon the beauty which they have betrayed ; but, as a late writer remarks, even for those who do not comprehend all its most profound and exquisite relations, the Catholic view ought to appear at least as the grandest of all those that have ever illumined the human race. In every order of things, he observes, it has left a footstep, a giant trace, a trace which the world adores, and which future generations will never equal. In poesy it made a Dante, the Homer of soul, and of the world of spirits, as the other was for the world of bodies. In art it made a Michael Angelo, and we do not speak of that common herd of great men, that crowd of illustrious geniuses, mixed together like the luminous souls in the glorious garlands of Dante, each of whom would have graced a world. In the con-

duct of nations it produced those two names, which still, in spite of the aberration of ages, represent the poles on which European society revolves, Charlemagne and Gregory VII., and the third ideal in which the fusion of that double genius was realized—St. Louis—Gregory VII., Charlemagne, and St. Louis, and by them, the most beautiful social edifice that ever existed, the grandest, the most holy fœderation, that which comprized the greatest number of nations—that which was of all others the most fruitful in every kind of glory. The Greek fœderation scarcely lasted two centuries, and they were stormy and uncertain. The union of nations under the Roman despotism endured longer, but its end was more dishonourable, and more bloody. The Christian republic endured at least for ten centuries, and in spite of the decay of the principle, which gave it birth, nothing but a return to barbarism can wholly overthrow it.

Initiated by truth itself in all the secrets of man and of society, the Church has never had any but grand views; therefore, as often as proud mediocrity, fierce and haughty on the ground of its isolation, has attempted to measure by its own standard the vast conceptions of Catholicism, one has heard it proclaim as false and untenable the divine views, whose magnificent totality is only unveiled to those intelligences, which are enlightened by all the light of which the Church is the focus. This is what was to be expected. Where could the spirit of man, spirit partial in its nature, learn to know and to feel that which is grand, that which is Catholic? In describing the narrow circumference which is assigned to it, if its attention be arrested by a detail which seems to it imperfect, it stops there, it declaims, it blasphemes, it remains eternally nailed to that spot; to leave it only one thing is wanting; to extend a little its regards, but this is to ask from it what is beyond its ability. Weakness, very excusable! if it were not in reality the fault of the heart. For our religion is admirable in this respect, that by it the man “of good will” placed on high, enjoys an horizon of which the extent can never be conceived by the man who wishes to be a rule unto himself. Happy prelude to that vision which is reserved for the clean of heart, in the abode of light, holy and eternal.

There remains but one characteristic of the Catholic

philosophy, not as yet especially noticed, which may be denominated its generosity and ennobling influence. That the perfection of the mind is not opposed to that of the heart, is proved as we have seen by the writings of the holy Fathers and the schoolmen; the effect of their philosophy is to dephlegmatize and to vivify. It formed no ice-hearted counsellors. "The tree of wisdom," says Hugo of St. Victor, "is only strong through love, it only becomes green through hope, which yields the joy that keeps the heart warm during the winter of this life*."

The language of the saints, with respect to the flames within their hearts, is well known. What astonishing things are recorded by faithful witnesses of St. Francis of Assisium, St. Theresa, Mary of Oegnis, Peter of Alcantara, and others? The heart of St. Catherine of Sienna glowed with such love, that she felt as if the common elementary fire was more cooling than warming †. "What is to be wise," asks Hugo of St. Victor ‡, "unless to love God? Love is wisdom." It would have been hard to convince this great luminary of the school, that hatred and mistrust were the best criterion of a vocation to philosophy, and that he was the best proficient who could repeat Satan's confession—only in destroying I find ease to my relentless thoughts. The peaceful loving character of Catholic wisdom gave all who possessed it an immense intellectual advantage, not only over the followers of the irreligious school in general, but also over those who advocated that system in particular, which rests on the supposed reformation of the doctrines of faith; for the protestor, who believes himself in exclusive possession of pure truth, being necessarily pressed upon from both sides by what he terms Romanism and ultra Protestation, must in effect be like a pedagogue of the Elizabethan school—always teaching and always angry; and Cardan remarks that, "the pedagogue's office is one of those, which, by their very nature produce folly, not only from the custom of teaching, but also from the habit of being made angry §."

The Catholic wisdom, moreover, taught men what a dangerous thing it is to admit such dark spirits and

* De Arca Morali, iii. 7. † Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii.

‡ In Eccles. Hom. xii. 149. § De Sapientia, lib. v.

phantoms as spring from suspicion into their soul: it warned them that the habit of mistrusting others would in time utterly drive out all truth, and love, and strength, and faith. Charity, while it prepared them for the worst, made them always believe and anticipate the best things. No frigid atmosphere came from them; for their hearts were kept inflamed by their intelligence; so that the monk Evagrus, shewing the importance of continuing to explain to Pagans the principles of religion, says, “at least, in approaching the torch to the eyes of the blind, if they do not see the light, they cannot avoid feeling its warmth*.” To each student of the Catholic schools one might apply Plato’s expression, ἐξημμένος ὑπὸ φιλοσοφίας ὡς περ πυρός†.

In fact, to the light which issued from them the universal world owed warmth and lustre. Thanks to its influence, there was no winter in the spiritual region, nor were souls ever cut off from each other, and frost-bound by selfishness, but all were blended and fused everlastingly into one living whole by the breath of love. St. Thomas remarks, that the first angel sinning is termed cherubim, which is interpreted plenitude of science, and not seraphim, which is glowing, as if through charity‡. The spirits whom faith had renovated, though, as Dante saith, “wonderful for wisdom of cherubic light,” were yet still more admirable for meriting the title of seraphic; and this praise belongs not to the school alone, but also to those great men of the sixteenth century, who sought to reconcile the views of Plato and his old philosophy with the Catholic faith. When one reads the philosophic epistles of Marsilius Ficinus, or of Picus of Mirandula, the heart is inflamed, the intelligence cheered and invigorated—one feels more pious, more confiding, and the effect of such study is to sweeten, to illumine, to sanctify the heart, and on the wings of their sublime contemplation the soul ascends to God. With what a noble sense of the dignity of the human intelligence does Ficinus encourage his disciple, saying to Antonio Faventino, “God himself will fight for religious philosophy, for piety—*si ergo Deus pro nobis quis contra nos* §?”

In later times natural philosophers, by confining their attention to the parts and mechanism of the external

* Apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. x. 3.

† LXIV. art. 1.

‡ Plato, Epist. xii.

§ Epist. lib. x.

world, have learned to speak of the human race as forming but a very humble portion of the creation, because they consider in man only the anatomical organization of his body; but the views respecting the importance of the rational creature, entertained by the schoolmen, who kept their eyes fixed upon the spiritual grandeur, the divine privileges, and the eternal destinies of man, were very different. St. Anselm says, "that all who live justly are angels of God*;" and John Scot Erigena expressed himself to the same effect, saying, "divine Scripture and reason prove that the human and the angelic natures are the same, or most similar†." "Even we," says St. Augustin, "in as much as we taste something eternal in our mind are not in this world‡." "You are not sent," says St. Bernard, "to behold the sun, moon, and stars, neither the firmament, nor the waters which are above the firmament. All these, although above you in place, are beneath you in dignity; they are bodies, but a part of you is spirit, superior to which you will search in vain for any thing which is not spirit§."

The Catholic view might naturally suggest the words of Plato, that in determining the character of a real philosopher, we must remember that minuteness is most contrary to the soul, which is about to aspire to a conception of the whole of things divine and human; that there must be in the mind a certain quality of magnificence, and a perception of all time and of all essence, which will necessarily lead to a contempt for human life, and a conviction that there is nothing terrible in death||."

"The sacred mysteries," says Picus of Mirandula, "commemorate seraphin, cherubin, and thrones." Than these we shall be no ways inferior if we wish; for let us observe what they do and how they exist, that by doing the same, we may have an equal lot with them. Seraphin burns with the fire of charity—cherubin shines with the splendour of intelligence—thrones stand by the firmness of judgment: therefore, if we fulfil the duties of the active and inferior life according to justice, we shall be established with the solidity of thrones; if suspending action, meditating on the Creator in the things created,

* *Cur Deus Homo*, ii. 8.

† *De Divisione Naturæ*, lib. iv.

‡ *De Trin.* 4.

§ *De Consideratione*, v. 3.

|| *De Repub.* lib. vi.

and on the things created in the Creator, we employ ourselves in contemplation, we shall shine on all sides with cherubic light ; if in charity we desire only the Creator, we shall be inflamed with that fire which is devouring in the seraphic image*.

To these lofty views of the dignity of our nature, all conceptions of its moral character corresponded, so that in the schools of faith, grandeur and virtue were shewn inseparably combined. "True philosophy," says Novalis, "is suicidal—it destroys self ; that is the real beginning of all philosophy." This profound thinker then would admit to the fullest extent the claim of the scholastics to be true philosophers, for the result of mystic love, according to Dionysius and Hugo of St. Victor, is to expel man from himself, *expelli incipiat et exire etiam a se*. This, in fact, is the Catholic view, diametrically opposed therefore to the moral system of the Utilitarian writers, deriving its strength from the selfish passions of our nature. The ancient philosophers themselves had shewn the folly of supposing that selfishness is the secret principle of human actions. Plato says, "that in love it is not what belongs to themselves, that men love as some have thought, unless indeed it be said that goodness belongs essentially to themselves, and that evil is something foreign to them, for it is nothing but goodness which men love and immortality†." Assuredly, it would have been difficult to persuade the schoolmen that the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord, could be compatible with the adoption of such a rule of life. "Utilitarian philosophy," says a distinguished living writer, "in destroying the dominion of the moral feelings, offends at once both against the law of honour and the law of God. It rises not for an instant above the world, allows not the expansion of a single lofty sentiment ; and its natural tendency is to harden the hearts and debase the moral practice of mankind."

The generous communicativeness which characterized the spirit of the Catholic philosophy, breaks out in a curious passage of Richard of St. Victor, where he shews that the consummation of perfect goodness and love cannot be obtained without three persons. "Let it disturb or anger no one," saith he, "if for the more clear intelli-

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. de Hominum Dignitate.

† Conviv.

gence of truth we speak in a humane manner of things divine. We convert this kind of speech to our purpose, with the more confidence, as we find it frequently in the holy Scriptures. The highest degree of goodness seems to be when the highest love is directed to that where nothing will be wanting to the fulness of its felicity. But this highest degree of perfection cannot be found between two persons only; for though each of these without doubt would draw the delights of love from the other, yet greatly is this joy increased to both when there is a third person to whom they can exhibit their love, and communicate their surpassing delights. For there would be something wanting to the sweetness of the two, if there were not a third to whom they could impart a communion in their love. Therefore, without a completion of the Trinity, there could not be the consummation of perfect goodness*.”

But we must conclude this chapter. In general the Catholic view verifies the remark of Richard of St. Victor, “that in proportion as the heart of man is delighted in admiration of the wisdom of God, it is expanded to the conception of more and greater things†,” that was in fact its godlike recompence.

The writings of St. Thomas, the great representative of Catholic philosophy, might be adduced in evidence, as exhibiting all the characteristics which we have ascribed to it. For, say those who have made his shining volumes their constant study, his philosophy is angelic. It is “*sicut angeli*,” according to Clement the Eighth, whose brief begins with those words;—it explains all things on the earth, seeing effects in causes, and causes in effects:—it is holy, for as Pope Clement the Sixth says, “From the writings of his wisdom and learning the universal church, collecting the fruit of spiritual abundance, is continually refreshed:”—it is sublime and beautiful, clear and in order, so that a learned theologian says, “After the sum of Thomas nothing remains but the light of glory—*Neque aliud superest nisi lumen gloriæ post summam Thomæ*:”—it contains universal truth, so that Labbæus says, “He who understands Thomas hath learned all things, yet doth not he who

* De Trinitate Pars. 1. lib. iii. c. 18. 14.

† Allegoriæ Tabernaculi Fœd.

hath learned all things understand the whole of Thomas;”—and it is so capable of being applied to the purposes of truth, that the celebrated Jerome Casanato says, “if every one were agreed to follow the principles of St. Thomas there would be no heresies in the world, no relaxation of morality which rules the consciences of men, and no wandering or illusion in mystic theology which prepares the way for holiness *.”

Such were the views not of one individual but of the ages of faith in general; for nothing singular can be detected in the wisdom of this great glory of the schools. The same character belonged to each one whose eyes were fast fixed on the eternal wheels, though with equal radiance the supreme light showered not over all.

CHAPTER XI.

IN divine speculation, the philosophers of the ages of faith considered man to be well in a twofold manner;—first, common and human; the second, excellent and perfect.—The first, say they, is when by intellectual virtues and sciences, by physics, and especially metaphysics, which teach him to consider divine properties from creatures, the intelligence is illuminated by God so as to believe in his existence and to see that virtue is preferable, which is to know God from the properties of creatures; but the second is excellent and perfect by beatitude, which is cleanness of heart, by which the human mind is joined to God so as to be immeasurably illuminated concerning occult and divine things. Of this beatitude, the influence upon the race of men in ages of faith has already been considered, in relation to the study and incidental results of moral and intellectual purity commencing with the heart. It remains to observe the direct evidence of history, with respect to the reward of such purity, as far as it could be inherited in the present life. “Now,” says St. Bernardine of Sienna, “the reward is greater than that of the preceding beatitudes.

* Epist. Encic. R. P. Anton. Cloche.

The one God, immense, eternal, immortal, incorruptible, and incomprehensible, is ineffable by word, uncircumscribable by place, interminable by time, conquering and superexceeding all our intelligence, and spiritual and corporeal vision : He dwells in light inaccessible. What is this promise then of the Saviour? Is a heart of flesh fit for this vision? To the spiritual substance of our soul, for a time united to a body, and to be separated from it hereafter either penally or happily, the Saviour prescribes this spiritual cleanness before the divine vision. To such a heart a triple vision of God is promised, first by nature, secondly by grace, thirdly by glory.” “In the wall of ignorance,” says Alanus de Insulis, “which separates us from God, there are four windows—for God can be known by creatures, he can be known by reason, he can be known by divine inspiration, and he can be known by the divine Scriptures—but these windows are often darkened, when the Creator is not read in creatures, when reason is made the handmaid to sensuality, when man is deserted by grace, and when the sacred Scripture is despised *” This passage will serve to direct our steps through the remainder of the present book : for we shall consider in what manner those who had attained to purity beheld God in creatures, in what appeared a deviation from the general laws by which the visible world is sustained, in the order of human life, in the records of men during the darkness of paganism, in the holy Scriptures, in the mysteries of faith, in the adorable Eucharist, and in the mystic union of their souls with his divine nature.

That the vision of God by nature was sought for by the ancient philosophers, appears from many passages of their writings, and St. Bernardine of Sienna says, that it was in some measure imparted to them by creatures, for man has natural reason by which he can know God, as the lamb by natural instinct knows its mother.† Let us hear Plato.—“Even that beauty of person, which seems so worthy of love, should lead men to love all beauty, and not to confine their affection to the beauty of one person which so quickly perishes, but rather to despise any single and detached instance. Afterwards we should esteem the beauty which is in the soul as far

* De Pœnitentia.

† Serm. X.

more worthy than that of the body, and this is what we should still more love. Thence we should proceed to discern the beauty which belongs to the objects of intelligence, and so, in fine, instead of being arrested by the beauty of some one person or some one sentiment, we shall learn to direct our view to the great sea of beauty, where, contemplating many beautiful and glorious sayings, we shall be strengthened, and enabled to produce corresponding sentiments, and arrive at beholding that one knowledge, as that one beauty. And then, O Socrates, there will be a wondrous vision, when we behold that beauty of essence for the sake of which, formerly, all labours had been endured! which, in the first place, always exists, and does not perish and again come into being, neither increasing nor diminishing; again, which is not beautiful in one part and vile in another, or beautiful then but not now, or beautiful in one respect but vile in another, or beautiful in that place but vile in this, or beautiful to some but vile to others; which will appear beautiful, not as a face, or hands, or any other body, not as some one discourse, or some one object of intelligence, or as any thing which exists in some one or other being, whether in an animal, or in the earth, or in the heavens; but that which is in itself, that one single essence from which all things derive whatever degree of beauty they possess, which is never either greater or less, and which can never suffer change—then we shall, at length, learn to know what is beauty, and then, if any where, man may truly live beholding it. For, since such is the power of this imperfect and partial beauty which exists in creatures, that you are always ready to forego eating and drinking provided you might always associate with those who possess it and behold them, what, think you, will be the enjoyment of those who can behold clearly that pure unmixed beauty, not polluted with flesh, and human colours, and other such dross, but that divine essence of all beauty *."

He insists upon pursuing the study of the sciences with the same intention and for the same end: thus, with geometry, he says it is necessary to examine whether it tend to enable the mind to see more clearly the ideal of good; but that it does tend to this is evident, inas-

* Conviv. cap. 29.

much as it compels the soul to turn to that place in which is the greatest happiness of essence, which it is necessary in every manner to behold. If it compel us to look on that, it is a fitting study, but if it lead us to look only on what is generated and corruptible it is useless. How conformable to the prayer offered up in ages of faith, not by a few philosophers only, but by the whole multitude, when every tongue repeated, "Deliver me from setting my heart upon any of thy creatures which may divert my eyes from a continual looking up to thee."

But let us hear the continuation of the philosopher's discourse.

"What is not unimportant, though difficult for others to believe, in each of these branches of learning, that is in studying the science of numbers, and geometry, and astronomy, a certain organ of the soul is purified and reanimated, which perishes and is rendered blind by other pursuits, though it would be better to save that organ than a thousand eyes. For it is only by this that truth is seen :"
Κρεῖττον δὲ σωθῆναι μυρίων ὀμμάτων, μόνῃ γὰρ αὐτῷ ἀλήθεια ὁράται. The advantage ascribed to the study of astronomy may be admitted, if we are convinced that it compels the soul to look upwards, and leads it from things here below ; but, on the other hand, it may be objected, that the very objects which this presents before the eyes may be an impediment to the real end of looking upwards ; "for I do not think that any kind of instruction can make the soul look upwards, excepting that which is concerning the Primal Being, and the invisible : *περὶ τὸ ὄν τε ἧ καὶ τὸ ἀόρατον* *."

Nor were these views confined to Plato : Aristotle described the predominant thought or feeling of Xenophanes, by saying that he gazed upon the whole heaven and said that the one Being was the Deity. All such passages, however, may be adduced rather as illustrations of the views of men in ages long subsequent, than as furnishing ground for exalting the merits of the Heathen sages. It may not be necessary to impute unphilosophical motives of vanity or ambition to the early enquirers of Greece : however admirable may have been their views, as respected themselves and a few choice disciples,

* De Repub. lib. vii.

the testimony of the Apostle is conclusive against them. If they knew God they glorified him not as God, but left the multitude to perish in the darkness of their idolatrous worship.

Albert the great says in general that “there is this difference between the contemplation of Catholics and of the Gentile philosophers; that the contemplation of the latter is on account of the perfection of him who contemplates, and therefore rests in the intellect, and so their end is in this knowledge of the intellect; but the contemplation of the saints, that is of Catholics, is on account of the love of God, who is the object of their contemplation: therefore it does not rest in the intellect by knowledge, but passes to affection by love*.”

Let us then resume our view of the Christian philosophy, and observe how the clean of heart beheld God in creatures.

St. Augustin, in his book of Retractions, acknowledges his former error, imputing total blindness to the unconverted, and says, “I do not approve of what I uttered in prayer, ‘O thou who hast wished that none but the pure should know truth,’ for it can be answered, that many who are not pure nevertheless know many truths.” It was something very different from a natural faculty of acute perception, that distinguished the clean of heart. Satan, in the middle ages, was regarded as surpassing, above all things, in the capacity of logician; and Plato had remarked that men of narrow minds, addicted to evil, have a most singular sharpness of discernment.—“Have you never observed,” he asks, “in men that are called bad, but skilful and wise, how acute is the perception of their little soul, ὡς ὀριμὸν μὲν βλέπει τὸ ψυχάριον, —how clearly it sees all the objects to which it turns itself—what a piercing sight it possesses, but compelled to minister to evil? So by how much more clearly it can see, by so much the more is it capable of doing evil†.” This extraordinary acuteness, or perhaps this diabolic cunning, is very different from the faculty of the pure, which enables them to behold truth. The vision of God, even in creatures, is ascribed by the schoolmen to a good will, assisted and directed by the illumination of divine grace;

* Albert. Mag. de Adhær. Deo, cap. 9.

† De Repub. lib. vii.

and therefore Richard of St. Victor exclaims, "*Felix cui visibilium scientia fit scala ad invisibilia cognoscenda* *." Happy then were the scholastic and mystic philosophers, the literate and the illiterate in ages of faith; for these men, like the angels, as Nieremberg observes, always beheld the face of their Father, who is in heaven †. The great contemplatist and poet accordingly, on meeting them in Paradise, perceives this to be their grand characteristic; for thus he sums up their intellectual excellence,—

“————— all these, on one sole mark,
Their love and vision fixed.”

“What is the form of visible things,” asks Richard of St. Victor, “unless a certain picture of things invisible ‡.” “*Omnis natura Deum loquitur*,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “*omnis natura hominem docet* §.” Again, in another place he says, “There is nothing in the universe which has not some participation in the highest good, and which, therefore, may not conveniently represent its image and similitude ||.” Accordingly we find that this great doctor shows a Socratic boldness in naming the lowest and most familiar things, for nothing was contemptible in his eyes. All spoke to him of God; for he could even feel with Shakspeare, that “there is some soul of goodness in things evil, would men observingly distil it out.” Through all his writings there is a great abundant religious contemplation of nature. With deep living feeling he speaks of seeking, finding, and understanding God in nature. This whole visible world is, to him, like a book written with God’s hand, and in the beauty of creatures is revealed to them that highest, everlasting, mysterious, and ineffable beauty ¶. Albert the great sees God in every art; “for nothing,” he says, “can subsist of its own virtue, or act, unless in virtue of God, the first moving power and first principle, who is the

* Ric. S. Vict. de exterminatione mali et promotione boni, p. i. Tract. iii. 16. † Doct. Ascet. lib. iv. p. iv. c. 34.

‡ De Contemplatione, p. ii. lib. ii. c. 18.

§ Erudit. Didascalicæ, lib. vi. c. 5.

|| Lib. Exposit. in Cœlest. Hierarch. c. ii.

¶ De tribus diebus, or de Trinitatis per visibilia agnitione.

cause of every action, and who works in every agent*.” “Ubi est Deus tuus?” say the impious, “O ignorantia cæca,” continues St. Bernardine of Sienna, “nescire ubi est ille qui ubique est †.” These men beheld God in the sublime faculties of the human intelligence, but no less also in the smiles of infancy; for when they saw a child delighted, and as if frantic for love and admiration over some lifeless toy, they could discern at such hours angels gathered about the little creature sporting lovingly around it, and they could see proof in that instinctive extasy that God himself was near. The fond play of a child, therefore, leads Dante to contemplate the felicity of heaven; for thus he sings—

Forth from his plastic hand, who charm'd beholds
Her image, ere she yet exist, the soul
Comes like a babe, that wantons sportively,
Weeping and laughing in its wayward moods;
As artless and as ignorant of aught
Save that her Maker being one who dwells
With gladness ever, willingly she turns
To whate'er yields her joy ‡.

Men of mystic illumination beheld and adored God even in the sufferings which they underwent in conformity to the decree of his Providence, or the order of nature. The seraphic Father, on his bed of death, composed the last strophe of his song of the sun as follows:—“Praised be my Lord for our sister corporal death, from which no man living can escape: woe to him who dies in mortal sin! Blessed are those who repose in thy holy will. The second death shall not be able to hurt them. Praise and bless my Lord, return him thanks, and serve him with great humility.”

“Although,” says St. Augustin, “that eternal and incommutable nature which is God, dwelling in himself, as it is said with Moses, *Ego sum qui sum*, be far different from all created things; although that substance is ineffable, nor can be disclosed to man by man, unless by means of certain arbitrary words of time and place, since he is before all time and beyond all place; nevertheless, ‘He who hath made us is nearer to us than many things, which are made. For in Him we live and move

* De Adhær. Deo, c. 16.

† Serm. vii.

‡ Purg. xvi.

and exist, but many of these are removed far from our minds through the dissimilitude of their nature, since they are corporeal.' Whence it is that to discover them greater labour is necessary, than to find Him by whom they were made, while it is better, to a degree of incomparable felicity, to discern Him in the least particle, with a pious mind, than to comprehend all these universal things. Therefore, rightly these inquisitors of this world are blamed in the book of wisdom. '*Si enim tantum,*' it says, '*potuerunt valere, ut possent æstimare sæculum, quomodo ejus Dominum non facilius invenerunt?*' For the foundations of the earth are unknown to our eyes, and he who founded the earth approaches near to our minds *."

The philosophers of the middle ages evidently felt what is so beautifully expressed by Novalis, that man stands with the visible world in as various and incomprehensible relations as with his fellow men; that as it shows itself childlike to the child, and bends itself condescendingly to his childish heart, so does it appear godlike to divine men, and sound in harmony with the highest spirit †. "It was their passion," as a poet saith, "nature's low tones and harmonies to hear—heard by the calm alone." To these tones, to these harmonic sympathies pervading the universe, we find repeated allusion in the lives of the saints; whose hearing was a communication not alone between soul and soul, but also between soul and things of which we know nothing or but little ‡. Hence, in their books are continually occurring sentiments, which poets borrow, as when they say,

In lonely glens, amid the roar of rivers,
Where the dim nights were moonless, have I known
Joys which no tongue can tell :—

Mary of Oignys used to retire from all observation, and escape into the fields and woods, and the whole day would elapse before she could be found again. We read of many holy persons, that they used to repair by night to solitary places, so that the poet does but echo what they felt when saying,

* De Genesi ad Litteram, lib. v. 34. † Schriften, ii. 75.

‡ Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 95.

To follow through the night the moving moon,
 The stars, and their development; or catch
 The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim:
 Or to look, listening, on the scattered leaves,
 While Autumn winds were at their evening song,
 These were my pastimes, and to be alone.

We have observed before, how dear to them was the spectacle of this beautiful world, how theirs were all the hues of heaven, sights and sounds of day's rise and decline. "Who can speak," says St. Augustin, "of all the beauties and treasures of the earth, and sea, and sky, that opake shade of woods, the colour and odour of flowers, the diversity of painted and singing birds, the multitude of admirable creatures, the changing hues of the ocean which clothes itself with different colours, as with a garment, that bland temperance of the air? And all these things are the consolations of the miserable and condemned, not the rewards of the blessed. What then will these be, if such be the former? *Quid dabit eis quos prædestinavit ad vitam, qui hæc dedit etiam eis quos prædestinavit ad mortem* *?"

It was the old Catholic thought therefore, which a later poet has expressed when saying,

"If God has so arrayed
 A fading world, that quickly passes by,
 Such rich provision of delight has made
 For every human eye.
 What shall the eyes that wait for him survey,
 Where his own presence gloriously appears
 In worlds that were not founded for a day,
 But for eternal years?"

"O my God, O sweet life of my soul!" it is Louis of Blois who speaks, "O my true health, O my only and eternal good, what do I wish? What do I seek but thee? Have I not all things if I have thee who didst create all things? Nothing is dear to me which thou didst not make. Behold, the beauty of the blessed angels, the beauty of holy souls, the beauty of human bodies, the beauty of brute animals, the beauty of the heavens, of the stars, of the earth, of plants, flowers, gems, metals, and all colours, the sweetness of sounds, of tastes, and

of all delights, all proceed from thee, whatever of beauty, grace, gentleness, elegance, sweetness, virtue, and dignity exists in creatures, all flows from thee*."

Then elsewhere alluding to the vision of God hereafter, he says, "if the spectacle of these visible heavens, if the sparkling lustre of the stars, the radiant splendour of the sun, the pale illumination of the moon, the brilliant light of day, if this spectacle be so ravishing, if it be so sweet to contemplate the elegant clothing and the engaging colours of the birds, and plants, and flowers, if the song of the nightingale and the lark, if the melody of instruments have such charms for us, if one inhales with such delight the odoriferous air, embalmed with roses and lilies, with aromatic plants and rich perfumes, if the savour of the various fruits be so agreeable to the taste; if, I say, all these things procure for us such lively enjoyment, with what a torrent of delight will not our soul be inundated when it shall contemplate without a cloud that infinite beauty, when it shall taste that ineffable sweetness whence flow all the beauty and all the sweetness of creatures.†" Therefore, if at any time discouragement and grief arose from the thought of being obliged, as the poet says,

"To leave unseen so many a glorious sight,
To leave so many lands unvisited,
To leave so many worthiest books unread,
Unrealized so many visions bright:"

Instead of exclaiming O! wretched, yet inevitable spite, the soul was hushed and vain regrets were stilled, with the remembrance that all would be found in God. "Nothing is lost," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "that is loved in God, since in Him all things are saved to us‡." How charming then is this first vision! Ah, those morning walks through fairest bowers of Italian shore—those mountain walks o'er moor and snowy alp—those friends and comrades of our elastic youth—those enchanting moments of inhaling the sweetest loveliness of nature! Where are they? Who will give them back to us? At times men believe they are returning, but they mistake memory for hope. They are gone; yet not for ever

* Lodovic Blos, *Enchirid. Parvulorum*, lib. ii. cap. 7.

† Id. *Instit. Spirit.* cap. 5. ‡ Serm. vii.

perished. He who gave them can restore them ; they were in his mind before we existed, and they will exist there, when we shall have removed hence. Ah, in heaven, we may have again those early walks, fresher than ever the balmy breath of incense-breathing morn yielded on this earth ! In heaven we may have them all again—lakes, woods, mountains, and Ausonian skies, in angels ever bright and fair—the friends and comrades of our youth !

“He alone never loseth what is dear to him,” says St. Augustin, “to whom all things are dear in Him, who is never lost.” Such was the great secret of Catholic generations in ages of faith.

O fortunati quibus est fortuna peracta
Jam sua, nos alia ex aliis in fata vocamur.

“We, miserable,” exclaims Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Lorenzo de Medici, “are always following the Italy which flies, whereas of necessity he alone can rightly follow Italy, and happily obtain it, who follows not that which flies, but that which remains. Remain, therefore, happy, my Lorenzo, in the love of God, who remains for ever*.” “In eternal felicity,” as St. Augustin says, “there will be present whatever will be loved, nor will any thing be desired but what will be present. Every thing there will be good, and the supreme God will be the supreme good, and he will be present for the enjoyment of those who love him ; and what above all is most blessed, it will be certain that so it will be for ever†.”

You perceive, reader, how different is the vision of God to the clean of heart, from the scientific discernment of his power by the observer of Creation. From the contemplations of a mere naturalist, the mind often draws melancholy, because, whatever food may be derived for vanity, the spectacle of his operations, without the constant and steady light of faith, leaves the heart cold, comfortless, and hollow ; but the poor hermit in his forest shade sees God with simple eyes, yet with unmixed delight ; though he may not be able to discover all the purposes of utility which the worm answers, he never passes him by with disgust. As he sits under some aged

* Mars. Fic. Epist. lib. iii.

† Trinit. cap. vii.

oak he watches the dark earth, and each creeping thing reminds him of his Creator. Come, let us observe him seated in the deep wood—see how he follows with his eyes the least creature at his feet; at one time it is perhaps a golden beetle carrying homeward something for its young—at another, a red spider, and then a spider striped like a zebra, and then an ant, heavily laden; and, observe how he praises aloud the mercy which is upon all flesh, the goodness which breathes life and happiness around him.

He repeats the words of Hugo of St. Victor, “as the soul is in all parts of the body constituting its life, so God is essentially in every creature, preserving it from annihilation, though how or in what manner I know not*.” Mysticism in the desert is the title of one chapter in the beautiful work of Goerres, in which he shews the great St. Antony, and the holy Fathers around him, studying the nature of created things, as a book containing the word of God†. Nor was this book neglected in the middle ages. It was while wandering on the banks of the Po, near Mantua, that Osanna Andreasi saw an angel, and heard those voices of all creatures and elements, singing, “Love God all ye who dwell upon the earth‡.”

In numberless places we find attested in the lives of saints, the fact of a mystic sympathy between their souls and all parts of creation, trees and plants, birds, and beasts, and insects. Blessed St. Francis, who used to speak to all created things, as if they had intelligence, loved to recognize in their various properties some trace of the divine perfections. His sermons to the birds, and those of St. Anthony of Padua to the fish, cannot be read without an intimate conviction of one's own comparative blindness and insensibility to the relations and harmonies of nature. In all ages this was a study which could draw the holy recluses into the woods; for as St. Theresa says, “as the labour of the bee does not prevent it from leaving its hive to search through different flowers, the matter for its work, so the study of one's self does not prevent the soul from sometimes taking its

* Annot. Elucid. Evang. Joan. † Die Christliche Mystik, i. 178.

‡ Goerres, Christliche Mystik, i. 331.

flight to consider the goodness and majesty of God, in the perfection of his creatures."

Thus walking in a trance of loving care,
They saw and felt the beauty shed around,
The blue above, the music in the air,
The flowers upon the ground.

"Love," says the ascetic contemplatist, "makes the circuit of heaven and earth, sea and land, and refers all things which it sees and hears in creatures to the glory of the Creator ; for there is nothing so little or vile in the nature of things in which may not be seen the goodness of the Supreme Being, his work in accomplishing, his power in creating, his wisdom in disposing, and his providence in rightly governing all things. This consideration causes the devout mind to praise God in all places and at all times, to exult, and to be glad *." The blessed clean of heart were the true students of nature : to them the visible world seemed a garden of roses, and a valley of lilies ; so conversant were they with such sweets, that the very titles of their books are borrowed from the flowers of a garden. "If your heart be right," says the ascetic guide, "then every creature is a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine." Having become like children, it was as if all that our first parents drew down upon themselves by disobedience, had been cast off from them. They walked again, as in Paradise ; and the Lord came forward, as he did then in the youthful age of the world, to meet the transfigured man.

Yes, it was for such hearts, inflamed with the love of God, that natural philosophy had indeed charms. Each one might have employed the poet's words, and in a sense peculiarly his own, have said,

The current, when his fair course is not hindered,
Makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage,
And so by many winding nooks he strays
With willing course :—
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
And make a pastime of each weary step,
Till the last step have brought me to my love.

That the philosophy of the middle ages should have

* Thom. à Kempis, *Horlutus Rosarum*, 13.

tended to the extension of these religious, rather than to the encouragement of merely scientific views of nature, can form no ground of reasonable objection to any one who reflects upon its character in other respects, and who admits that it is not unphilosophical to be consistent. What secures for the modern system in general the accession of many illustrious names, is the opinion that the inductive sciences constitute the only true philosophy, and that these did not commence until the decline of faith. A universal excitement in the minds of men to pursue natural philosophy was, undoubtedly, one result of the religious revolution; for from causes already noticed, physical reasoning had been neglected, and "it seemed," says a great philosopher of our times, "as if the genius of mankind, long pent up, had at length rushed eagerly upon nature, and commenced with one accord the great work of turning up her hitherto unbroken soil, and exposing her treasures." Certainly, there was sufficient proof at that time of a great commencing change in the direction of the human faculties; and upon the whole no one can question but that the identifying of all philosophy with a steady uninterrupted application to scientific pursuits, which has produced what the same illustrious philosopher terms "this happy and desirable state of things," may be justly ascribed to the founders of a new theology, whose principles were quite adequate to give a totally different direction to the human mind, from what it had been receiving during sixteen centuries, and to produce a state of society, in which truths of a different order would be regarded as of the first importance, while those which had before engrossed the world would be consigned to men of inferior capacity, as not being worth the attention of real philosophers. But when all this is admitted, much remains to be proved, before arriving at the conclusion which so many draw, that the philosophy of the middle ages was contemptible, and that those who pursued it, preferring to see God in creatures to fixing their eyes on his material works, were men totally void of any genuine principle conducive to wisdom. We have already seen how far the theological element entered into all views of philosophy with the ancients, and it may assuredly be a question whether they would have approved of the view of philosophy adopted by their professed admirers in subsequent times.

The lessons of Pythagoras were certainly not confined to particular branches of mathematics, or physical science, but were clearly meant to throw the fullest light on the greatest questions which can occupy the human mind *. Cicero, in extolling the excellence of the earlier Romans, appeals to qualities which no one would now presume to mention in any assembly, when discourse turned on philosophy, “*quæ enim tanta gravitas,*” he says, “*quæ tanta constantia, magnitudo animi, probitas, fides, quæ tam excellens in omni genere virtus in ullis fuit, ut sit cum majoribus nostris comparanda?*” Evidently he would have termed such not a barbarous and melancholy epoch, but rather “a happy and desirable state of things.” Yet there is no mention of a progress in science, but on the contrary he proceeds to say that philosophy was then unknown. “*Philosophia jacuit usque ad hanc ætatem†.*” Let us hear the wisest of the Greeks: “O Cebes, when I was young, it was wonderful how greatly I desired to acquire that wisdom which relates to natural history; for it seemed to me to be a proud thing to know the causes of each physical phenomenon, to discover its origin and its end, and why it perishes; and oftentimes I turned myself up and down, examining such things, and endeavouring to discover whether it was from the blood that we had the faculty of thinking, or from the air, or from fire, or from none of these things, but from the brain, which afforded us the power of hearing and seeing; and again examining the causes of destruction, and the things in the heavens, and those of the earth, at last, I came to the conclusion, that I was not qualified by nature for such investigations. For in the first place I found that this study only rendered me more conscious of ignorance, and that it deprived me of much that I had before known. It seemed then to me afterwards when I had examined the essence of things, that it would be necessary to take care lest I should suffer what those persons experience, who look stedfastly at the sun; for sometimes they lose their eyes, unless they look at its reflection in water, or through some other medium. This, then, I understood, and I feared lest altogether I should blind my soul by looking at things with my eyes, and endeavouring to touch each of them. Therefore it seemed to me to be necessary to

* Thirlwal, Hist. of Greece.

† Tuscul. i. 1.

take refuge in words, and in them to look at the truth of things, setting out on the principle of there being something beautiful and good, and great in itself, and from that proceeding to demonstrate that the soul is immortal*." His prayer seems thus to have been that of Solomon, "*Animo irreverenti ne tradas me Domine,*" and his experience and conclusion similar, "*Proposui in animo meo quærere et investigare sapienter de omnibus quæ fiunt sub sole. Hanc occupationem pessimam dedit Deus filiis hominum ut occuparentur in ea*†."

Many of the Fathers had revived, in a still more peremptory form, the opinion of Socrates, that the only valuable philosophy is that which teaches us our moral duties and religious hopes†. "Thus," Eusebius says, "it is not through ignorance of the things admired by them, but through contempt of their useless labour, that we think little of these matters, turning our souls to the exercise of better things." St. Augustin, after quoting the celebrated lines in Virgil's second Georgic, remarks, that Christians do not think it a source of happiness to know the causes of the great physical movements of the world, of the tides and the elements; but that they count him only happy who acquires the knowledge which serves to deliver him from moral error, that would endanger his salvation§. St. Clement of Alexandria also shews the evil of continuing to rest in a mere secular instruction; "for some," he says, "enticed by the philtres of hand-maidens, neglect their mistress philosophy, and grow old, some in music, others in geometry, others in grammar, and the greatest part in rhetoric. But, he continues, as the vulgar sciences are intended to wait upon philosophy, their mistress, so also philosophy itself must wait upon the possession of wisdom; for philosophy is a study, a discipline, but wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human, and their causes. Wisdom, therefore, has superiority over philosophy, as the latter has over elementary instruction||."

Such were the views of philosophers in the middle ages. "If you wish to be wise," says Peter the Venerable, "do not boast in the loquacity of logic, or the curiosity of physics, or in the knowledge of any thing

* Plato, Phædo, 99.

† Eccles.

‡ Brucker, iii. 317.

§ Enchirid. cap. v.

|| Stromat. lib. 1. cap. 5.

but of Jesus Christ and him crucified *.” “Philosophy and learned study,” says Melchior Canus, “cannot afford happiness, for they yield to a thousand and the vilest things. They must necessarily be confined to a few. They increase not the rest but the labour of man; they do not satisfy, but excite our desires. *Humana quippe mens quamdiu hic vivitur, rerum cognitione torqueri potest, satiari non potest*†.” Their deep conviction might have been expressed in Dante’s words :

“ Well I discern, that by that truth alone
Enlightened, beyond which no truth may roam,
Our mind can satisfy her thirst to know ‡.”

The schoolmen and philosophers of ages of faith, therefore, instead of being employed with one accord in the great work of turning up the soil of nature, and exposing her treasures, were united in the task of evangelizing the nations, preaching, illustrating, defending, and confirming the truths relating to the soul, and the worship of God, and the future destinies of man. But are they on that account to be set down as void of any principle of genuine philosophy, and deserving only reproach? Would there not be much more solid ground for condemning those who would confine philosophy to the physical and geometrical sciences, which Bossuet styles the “vain pasture of curious and weak minds, because they nourish pride at little expense of mind, and demand from the passions no sacrifice.” “Physic,” says Lord Bacon, “carrieth men in narrow and restrained ways, subject to many accidents of impediments;” but *latæ undique sunt sapientibus viæ*; and Solomon elegantly describes this saying, “when thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shall not stumble.” Chemistry, mathematics, sciences of destruction and of abstraction, did not so engross the attention of men as to leave them without solicitude for the philosophy of life, which seemed of infinitely greater importance, when “by the balance of experience it was found that the astronomer looking to the stars might fall into a ditch, that the enquiring philosopher might be blind in himself, and that the mathematician might draw forth a

* S. Pet. Ven. Ab. Clun. Epist. lib. i. 9.

† De Locis Theolog. lib. ix. c. 9.

‡ Par. IV.

straight line with a crooked heart." However, it must not be inferred from hearing the declamations of Lactantius*, that the church in general discommended the study of natural philosophy, and that the schoolmen deemed it empty and false. The latter never spoke with disrespect of science. Sir William Temple was not of their college, who says, "as to that part of philosophy which is called natural, I know no end it can have, but that of either busying a man's brains to no purpose, or satisfying the vanity so natural to most men, of distinguishing themselves, by some way or other, from those that seem their equals in birth and the common advantages of it. More than this, I know no advantage mankind has gained by the progress of natural philosophy, during so many ages it has had vogue in the world, excepting always what we owe to the mathematics†." The schoolmen indeed, along with all the devout people in ages of faith, daily besought God, in the words of David, to teach them goodness and discipline, as well as science‡. But it is in later times that metaphysicians have been found to utter words of discouragement to check the ardour for scientific enquiry. At the same time what persuasion on their tongue, when saying with Malebranche, "men are not born to become astronomers or chemists, to pass all their lives hanging over a telescope or a crucible, to draw from their labours consequences of no very great importance. Let their efforts be crowned with ever such complete success, they may have gained reputation in the world, but are they wiser or happier§?" Alas! one can read the answer to the latter question in the looks of philosophers. Mark that subtle mechanician who journeys from the valleys of the Jura to the cities of Constantine, and the farthest capitals of the West, to exhibit his wondrous fabric, in which images of birds fly round miniature magicians, who shake their cups, performing feats of secret art, while sweetest music warbles from the little temple. Do you not observe how unmoved, dark, and mournful he stands, looking on vacancy, evincing by his countenance how little his heart partakes in the rapture of the astonished gazers,

* Whewell, Hist. of Induct. Science, i. 253.

† Essays.

‡ At Tierce.

§ Recherche de la Vérité, Preface.

who behold for the first time the work on which twenty years of his life have been consumed? So much for their happiness; but are they wiser?

An illustrious philosopher of modern times has remarked, that the mathematicians who have only deduced from the principles of the great original discoverers of the laws of nature, who have taken for granted those primary laws, and only worked out from them, who so often have been irreligious men, careless or deniers of a Creator, possessed in reality no peculiar privileges or advantages, that their errors are no more worthy of notice than those of common men, and that from the deductive habits of their mind, we have no reason to expect any other result *."

"By a too exclusive devotion to the pursuit of natural truth," another eminent Professor observes, "the higher intellectual powers may be cramped; for in the pursuit of any subject, however lofty, a man may become narrow-minded, and in a condition little better than that of moral servitude †."

Before the rise of the new opinions the genius of mankind had been directed towards nature's God, as chiefly manifested by revelation, and therefore as the scientific knowledge of material things was not the paramount and ultimate object of pursuit, there was neglect in their investigation. In ages of faith men were aware that this was so. "One does not find," says Malebranche, "that Jesus Christ and his apostles wished to remove certain errors from men, which Monsieur Descartes has detected;" but what then? Can we condemn them for concluding with the same philosopher, in the words which terminate his great work on the Search of Truth, that, after all, "it is much better as good men to pass some years in ignorance of certain things, and find ourselves in a moment enlightened for ever, than to acquire by natural ways, with much application and pain, a very imperfect science, which leaves us in darkness for all eternity?"

It is an error to suppose that the barbarians, on their invasion of the Roman empire, in the fifth century, interrupted the progress of the sciences. They had ceased to

* Whewell, Treatise on Astronomy.

† Sedgwick, Address to Geolog. Society, London, 1831.

be cultivated with any general application since the second century; and Baron Cuvier remarks, that this was a necessary consequence of the rise of the Christian religion, which had diverted the minds of great men to the contemplation of things divine, and quite of a different order from those which occupy the attention of the natural philosopher. He says, that it was not till the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century that the cultivation of natural philosophy revived, on the decline of the religious spirit which had prevailed in the middle ages. From this proposition, however, and its proof, it can never be concluded that in any age the philosophy of the school was hostile to the great and interesting investigations of natural science. The holy Fathers, notwithstanding the bursts of declamatory eloquence in which some of them indulged, held a very different language." St. Clement of Alexandria, showing the importance of philosophical study, remarks, that Abraham had occasion to evince his knowledge both in astronomy and arithmetic *. "Some," he observes, "thinking to be ingenuous, make no account of philosophy, neither of dialectics, nor of natural sciences, but desire only faith; but as in husbandry and in medicine he who has the greatest variety of knowledge is better able to excel in those arts, so also every kind of instruction conduces to serve truth; and whether it be in geometry or music, grammar or philosophy, assists us to guard our faith †." Such was the universal sentiment throughout the middle ages. "If true devotion," says Richard of St. Victor, "can convert to some use of virtue the very sciences, which are without doubt perverse, what is to be thought of those which can be useful and good ‡." The schoolmen, in one sense, accepted of Michael Scot's definition of philosophy, who says, that it is the knowledge of every thing §; but then they added, with Henry of Ghent, "all human sciences are ordained to the end of human life, which is the clear vision of God hereafter ||." "It is certain," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that all natural arts and sciences serve divine wisdom,

* Stromat. lib. vi. c. 11.

† Id. lib. i. c. 9.

‡ De Erudit. Hom. Interior. p. i. lib. ii. xi.

§ Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Doctrin. lib. i. 13.

|| Hen. Gand. sum. l. art. vii. q. ix.

and that the inferior, rightly ordered, can conduce to the higher wisdom *." Accordingly, in all the great encyclopedical works of the middle age, the study of the sciences is shown to be subservient to theology, as may be witnessed in the vast collection known under the title of the *Vocabularium Salomonis*, by the monks of St. Gall, in the ninth or tenth century, in which the terms and object of all branches of knowledge are given from the works of the holy Fathers, of historians, orators, poets, physicians, naturalists, Christian and heathen classic authors, and arranged in alphabetical order, occupying one thousand and seventy pages; "a writing which we think," says Ekkehard, "will never be surpassed." In this work, among Greek authors, are quoted Aristotle, Hippocrates, and some but little known at present, *Pandectus Medicus*, *Placidus*, *Afrinius*. There is no naturalist named, but only in general we read "*hoc physici dicunt*." Still more clearly is this spirit expressed in the analogous compilations of a later date, such as the *Didascalion*, or the *Eruditio Didascalica* of Hugo of St. Victor, the *Mirrors* of Vincent of Beauvais, the *Metalogicus* and *Polykraticus* of John of Salisbury, and the work of Honorius of Autun de *Animæ Exilio et Patria*, the grounds of all which were furnished by Cassiodorus in his work on the Arts and Discipline of Liberal Letters, as also on the Institutes of Divine Letters, and by Isidor of Seville, in his twenty books of *Etymologies*. The address in Dante—

"O thou, who every art and science valuest!"

might, therefore, have been applied, with strict justice, to the philosophers of the middle ages.

"The wisdom of man in this life," says Hugo of St. Victor, "consists in the search and investigation of wisdom †." "Our intelligence in the present life," says the Angel of the School, "has a natural aptitude for knowing material things, and therefore at present we cannot know God unless by material effects. Hereafter the defect of our intelligence will be removed by glory, and then we shall be able to see God in his essence ‡."

* *De Sacramentis*, lib. i. pars 1. c. 6.

† Hugo S. Vict. in *Eccles. Hom.* xii.

‡ P. 1. q. lxxxvi. art. 2.

He even says, "to seek science not on account of something useful is not vain, since a natural desire cannot be vain *." It was not a rare thing in the schools of the middle ages to see some disciple from a rustic village, like the poor lad whom Pythagoras took from his play to instruct him in geometry, who would enthusiastically support his instructor rather than lose the advantage of hearing him †. Tournon says, "that St. Thomas drew his wisdom in part from the study of nature," and cites his words: "This consideration of nature leads men to admire the virtue of Highest God, and from this admiration proceed the fear and reverence of God; it also kindles the love of the divine goodness ‡." Nothing in fact can be stronger than his language on this point throughout the four first chapters of the second book *contra Gentes*. "The consideration of creatures," he says, "is even necessary, not only for the instruction of truth, but also for the exclusion of errors §; for error concerning creatures redounds to a false knowledge concerning God. Error circa creaturas redundat in falsam de Deo scientiam ||." Hence the church, in the office of Tierce, beseeches God, in the words of David, to teach her children science.

But who can now conceive the simplicity of heart and spiritual illumination with which the men of faith pursued even these natural sciences? "To know truth," they said, "was to be united to God by natural force; to contemplate the true ideas of things was a kind of possession of God. An application of mind to metaphysics, to pure mathematics, and to all universal sciences, which rule over and comprise particular sciences, was held by them to be the purest and most perfect application of the mind to God of which man is by nature capable ¶." And hence we find Roger Bacon speaking of those "who had holily pursued mathematical science." To them all knowledge was mathematical. St. Thomas says, that it belongs to science to have a true judgment of creatures; for want of which man is lost, as where he rests in them as his last end, and thus offends God.

* In *Metaphys.* Arist. lib. i.

† *Jamb. de Pyth. vita*, c. 5.

‡ *Lib. ii. Cont. Gentes*, c. 2.

§ *Lib. ii. c. 23.*

|| *Lib. ii. c. 3.*

¶ *Malebranche, Recherche de la Vérité*, v.

“Flagitiosum facinus est,” says St. Augustin, “frui utendis et uti fruendis.” So that, in his eyes, devotion itself was science. “Meditation,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “delights in having a vast open space for exercise, where it may have a free scope for contemplating truth, for investigating the cause, one time of this, another of that, then, again, penetrating into deep things, and leaving nothing doubtful or obscure. If any one should learn to love such studies and pursue them, he would render his life sweet, and provide a great consolation for time of adversity; for this it is which separates the mind from the noise of earthly actions, and imparts even in the present life a certain sweet foretaste of eternal rest. And when, by the things which are made, he learns to seek and to understand Him who made all things, he at the same time instructs his mind with science and refreshes it with joy*.”

Even in scientific inquiries, the philosophers of the middle age evince the deepest humility. “Since the things of which we treat,” says Roger Bacon, “are great and uncommon, there should be grace and favour shown to human fragility. Nam ea quæ sunt maxime cognitionis secundum se, sunt minime apprehensionis quoad nos. For truth involved is hidden, and placed in the depths †.”

The manner in which the more curious investigations of nature were recommended and pursued during the middle ages may deserve attention, even while speaking of the laudable zeal for scientific observations. Isidore ‡ and Martianus Capella § endeavour to show that the doctrine of numbers is of great importance; and they remark, that in many places of Scripture a mystery is attached to them. The construction of the ancient churches, on the principles of a secret harmony, showed how their architects had been familiar with those curious mensurations of the human body which the ancients copied in all their works, and how scientific were their conceptions of proportion. In the type of Gothic architecture subsist the traditions of antiquity respecting the doctrine of numbers and proportions, as Michelet shows

* Hugo S. Vict. Didasc. lib. iii. c. 11.

† Opus Maj. p. i. a. 1.

‡ Etymolog. lib. iii. c. 5.

§ De Nuptiis Philologiæ et Mercurii, lib. vii.

by measurements made in the different cathedrals of France * : and it is the remark of a great English philosopher, that this art did not flourish at all the worse for being treated in a manner somewhat mystical, and that the relations of geometrical figures, which were employed as appears from Cesario's plan of the cathedral of Milan, may really involve principles of beauty or stability †. The treatise on the analogy of names, by Cardinal Thomas Cajetan, truly a second St. Thomas, may show how alive were Catholic philosophers to pursue every subject under a scientific form. If, however, we should be disposed to accuse those of the middle age as inclining to fanciful speculations, we should remember that they never lost sight of a solid and useful end; and, in fact, their aim seems to have always been to pass, as Cicero says, "from these shells to the kernel; and as it often happens that he who is recommended to some one makes more of him to whom he is recommended than of him by whom," so they would have said with the same philosopher, "it is not strange that we, at first recommended to wisdom by such elementary things, should afterwards prize Wisdom herself far more than those who first conducted us to her ‡." Some of their inquiries, to which they attached importance, had occupied the attention of the greatest intelligences in the ancient world. Every one has heard that a candidate who sought admission among the Pythagoreans had to satisfy the eye of the master, who would not receive any one to his friendship, or even amongst his acquaintance, unless from his countenance and external manner he conceived a good opinion of his mind §, Cylo the Crotonian being rejected by him on no other ground. The observation of nature with a view to this kind of proficiency was much practised in the middle ages. Raban Maur says that Vultus is so called "quod per eum voluntas animi ostenditur ||." The address of Michael Scot to the emperor, recommending him to study physiognomy on the ground that nature does nothing in vain, and that nothing in bodies is without

* Hist. de France, ii. 676.

† Whewell, Hist. Induct. sc. i. 350.

‡ De Finibus, lib. iii.

§ Porphyry. de Vit. Pythag.

|| Glossæ Latino-Barbaricæ de Partibus Humanæ Corporis apud Goldast. tom. ii.

its purpose, is a passage which cannot be read without interest. His book, compiled at the request of the Emperor Frederick, begins as follows:—"Emperor, amongst the things about which you ought to be solicitous is the knowledge of good and evil. It is necessary for you to investigate by yourself, in books of authors of all sciences, and especially of those which are called arts; and this you will do when your mind is in quiet rest and your body has liberty, putting aside the business of nations pertaining to your majesty; for you should know that there are two times to a man living—the time of peace and the time of war; and there are two times of food—of corporal and spiritual: and as the corporal retains the body in a good state, so does spiritual the mind, when taken at a proper season, for not at all times all things are fitting. So spiritual meat retains the mind in a good state if it be taken with reason and measure in fitting time, respecting both age and virtue in man; for it is written, as frigid by warm and warm by frigid is tempered, so contrary things are cured by contraries. Similarly it is useful to inquire from diverse authors and masters, on account of diverse sciences, because different men feel different things, *diversi diversa sentiunt*; therefore it is my advice that you keep always carefully with you doctors, masters, and men naturally ingenious, and that you often converse with them on many subjects, wisely and in a domestic manner. You will think of different things with different men, and you will question them, and you will treasure up their sayings in your heart, that afterwards they may be profitable to you and to others. It is your study to reign long, and this will result if you give yourself to virtues, avoiding vices; and of such mortality I will say something, if God willeth; but here I will say that you give your heart to the knowledge of good, according to the measure of discretion; that you may be the friend of God in faith, hope, and work, nor omit to embrace that science which, by philosophers, is naturally named physiognomy; and this is that science, amongst others, by which many men cautiously are accustomed to boast and to be exalted with the great of the earth—emperors, similarly, with many kings and barons; not because they have precedence of other men, but on account of this science, and on account of many others of the same kind which they know secretly.

Therefore it is said, honour a man on account of science; seek a known friend on account of necessity: for with some it is better to philosophize than to be rich; and with some it is better to be rich than to philosophize; and with some both are injurious, and with some neither ought to be required—as with those making true penance in this life; for the investigation of science is the most beautiful thing in nature, and its perfection is ascribed to physiognomy by many of the ancient philosophers. Therefore this science drew its name from that study of nature which was long and long investigated, and with innocence congregated; for a wise man saith physiognomy is the science of nature, and he that is skilled therein can sufficiently know the differences of animals and of persons in all their degrees, and in effect all science. Physiognomy is the doctrine of salvation, the election of good, the renouncement of evil, the comprehension of virtue, and the putting aside of vices. But this is induced by the true love of God and the fear of the devil—by meritorious faith, the hope of an imperishable reward of eternal life, and the judgment of death; because it seems almost as if here all things are left to others, because they are held; and to no one availeth science, or power, or congregation of persons, or the grace of beauty or will; therefore some other saith, *Omnia transibunt, nos ibimus; ibitis; ibunt: cari, non cari conditione pari*; and elsewhere it is said, *Omnia transibunt præter amare Deum*. Establish, therefore, to thyself, O Frederic, emperor! abbreviated rules and constitutions of this science of physiognomy, the yoke of which will draw upon you a great price of praise, of wisdom, and virtue; there will increase to you also greatly a vast genius of wisdom, which if you keep always in mind you will better understand the sayings of those who speak to you, you will more cautiously estimate your wise men and others by seeing or hearing them, and also other men indifferently who may have occasion to address you, which is not a little thing; and by industry in this science you will have in you secretly a great part of the counsels of those counselling you.”

That science of this kind entered largely into the wisdom which passed in romantic literature for magical, may be presumed. The Dean of Badajos, who consults

the magician Torribio of Toledo, to whom he vows eternal gratitude, who on descending into his caves beneath the Tagus has a vision, in which, supposing himself raised to the highest offices, he repays his benefactor with insult and cruelty, and thus verifies what his teacher had predicted, until the latter removes the spell and brings him back to his senses, is an instance in proof.

With respect to the more solid studies of physical science, we may observe that the love for the beauties of external nature, which was so predominant in ages of faith, and so interwoven with the simplicity of Catholic manners, was not remotely allied to a spirit of subtle enquiry into her secrets. The public voice in the middle ages would not have resembled that of the young sophist in the comedy, who affirms that the sole prerogative of men over other animals consisted in their having the power to vote*. The standard of beatitude, in those times, was not that of Strepsiades,

Νικᾶν πράττων καὶ βουλευών, καὶ τῇ γλώττῃ πολεμίζων.

but the general conviction rather was, that the prerogative of man consisted in the faculty of investigating creatures, and his beatitude in seeing God who made them. This gave a charm even to all the ordinary labours of life. Who can doubt but that to the children of St. Benedict spread over the world, the tilling of the ground became as much an exercise of philosophy as of penance. Their example alone, in that respect, was sufficient to prepare a new era for society; and the cultivation of the earth was no longer ignominious. "Agriculture in Paradise would not have been laborious, as after the fall," says St. Thomas, "but it would have been delightful, on account of the experiment of the virtue of nature †."

That the church protected and encouraged every department of science is a fact which no one denies until he has some end to answer in misrepresenting the ecclesiastical authority. Copernicus, as we have already seen, addressed the work which contained his discoveries to Pope Paul III.; and it was published, as the author states, at the entreaty of friends, one of whom was a cardinal, Nicolaus Schonbergius, whom he styles in omne

* Nubes, 1329.

† P. i. q. c. 11. art. 3.

genere literatum celebris, and the other a bishop, Tide-
mannus Gisius, whom he describes as *sacrarum et om-
nium bonarum literarum studiosissimus* *.

But, it will be replied, granting that the study of the sciences was sanctioned and encouraged, still the result was undeserving of the name of philosophy. That such an opinion should be nearly universal at present is not strange, when we read in one of the best and most popular works on the history of science, that "previous to the publication of the *Novum Organum* of Lord Bacon, natural philosophy, in any legitimate and extensive sense of the word, could hardly be said to exist." But, as far as relates to incompatibility of principles, we have already seen on what ground such statements depend, since it is not true that the method of conducting physical investigations had previously been exclusive of experiment and induction. With respect to the positive results, too, it would not be difficult, perhaps, to awaken doubts lest much that has been written by men who wanted either leisure or inclination to consult the works of the middle ages may not require some correction. Roger Bacon complains that for the last thirty or forty years mathematical science had declined †. Such a complaint is rather inconsistent with the common opinion that his light was that of a new and solitary star. The science which was possessed by the Anglo-Saxon monks cannot be wholly overlooked by an impartial observer ‡. One meriting that title will not forget their eagerness to calculate the orbits of the planets, their rising and setting, and the return of the eclipses, and that the influence of the moon on the tides was not a secret to Bede. He will remark that the smallness of our globe compared with the heavens was known to them through the work of Boethius. A scientific astronomical table, showing the course of the stars, was for three hundred years shown in the abbey of St. Gall as the work of Tutilo in the ninth century §. In the same cloister Hermann Contractus, in 1050, published astronomical works. Hartmotus, who was abbot of that house in the tenth century, made a map of the world with subtle ability, as old

* Præf. ad Paul III.

† *Specula Mathematica*. I.

‡ Bede *de Natura Rerum*—*De Ratione Temporum*.

§ Ildefons. von Arx *Geschichte S. Gall*, i. 100.

writers say. That science was sometimes prized may be inferred from the fact that Alphonso X. of Castile, in 1262, gave more than four hundred thousand crowns to some Arabs for drawing up astronomical tables. The views in general with which men pursued medicinal philosophy, though it was rather diætetetic than pharmaceutical, being counted not among the liberal arts, but as a second philosophy, which required a knowledge of them all*, seem to indicate that they were not wholly ignorant of its proper mode of cultivation.

A list of the possessions in art and science which we inherit from the middle ages would certainly startle any one who has never heard of them excepting from modern historians of philosophy. If the assistance of Aristotle was demanded in the study of natural philosophy, we must by no means conclude that his commentators in the middle age never sought to obtain additional truths or new generalizations, or to bring his assertions to the test of experiment. The servility ascribed to them by a recent author is not reconcileable with their avowed intentions. Albert the Great, being appointed by the Dominicans to lecture on Aristotle, explains his plan as follows, in the beginning:—"It is our intention," he says, "in natural science, to satisfy as far as we are able the brethren of our order, who for many years past have been requesting us to compose for them such a book on physics as will convey to them a knowledge of natural science, and also enable them to understand Aristotle. Our manner, therefore, will be to follow in this work the order of Aristotle, and to add whatever will be necessary to explain his meaning, but without making mention of his text; and besides this, we shall occasionally make digressions†." Their having taken for granted the moral truths revealed respecting the universe, was a feature of their philosophy which ought not to have given offence. "In general," says Marjorin, "the object of a science referred to its cause, considered in its type, and in a manner seen in God, furnished that science with a general theorem, which implied the law of generation of all the realities relative to that object, and the principle of all truths manifested by them; and though

* Isidori Etymolog. lib. iv. 13.

† Physic. lib. i. Tract. i. c. 1. tom. ii.

modern philosophers, who reject all considerations of causes and ends, and confine themselves strictly to the observation of facts, deserve praise for not suffering vain fancies, in the absence of true principles, to interfere with that observation, one cannot doubt but that their progress would have been greater if they had imitated the scholastics, so far as not to neglect systematically the light of revelation and the action and destiny of man in appreciating the system of the universe." In some respects it would seem as if the expressions of philosophers in the middle ages, relative to scientific subjects, had been less fettered than those of some modern writers of late in England—or rather, I should say, there is reason to conclude that the idea of any restraint being required on religious grounds, as long as they did not seek to make religion come forward to confirm their scientific views, never occurred to them. The allusion of Dante,

“There are who deem the world hath oft been into chaos
turned *,”

seems to indicate that the opinion of modern geologists was not unknown to the middle ages. In fact, St. Jerome, speaking of certain notions in the work of Origen, *περι Ἀρχῶν*, says that in the second book he asserts that there are innumerable worlds, not existing at the same time and like one another, as Epicurus held, but that at the end of one world another would begin; and that before this world of ours there had been another world, and that another would succeed it, and so on, in long order; and he doubted whether these worlds resembled each other, or were dissimilar †; and St. Jerome says he supported this notion from the text, “*Quid est quod fuit? ipsum quod erit. Et quid est quod factum est? ipsum quod futurum est. Et non est omne novum sub sole, quod loquatur et dicat: Ecce hoc novum est. Jam enim fuit in sæculis pristinis, quæ fuerunt ante nos ‡*,” on which passage St. Jerome makes no comment. St. Basil, indeed, expressly says, that “before this world there existed something that our mind can

* Hell. xii.

† Id. Epist. xciv. ad Avitum.

‡ Ecclesiast. i. 9, 10.

imagine, but which the Scripture suppressed in its recital, because it was not convenient to speak of it to men whom it instructed, and who are children for knowledge. "Yes, without doubt," he adds, "before this world was created there existed a constitution more ancient, agreeable to the celestial powers—a constitution which has preceded visible times, which has had a beginning, but which will never have an end *." The schoolmen would not have been alarmed at the works of some modern professors, which have excited uneasiness, of late, in England.

Hugo of St. Victor, speaking of the sayings of the holy Fathers respecting the creation of the world in six days, says, "I rather believe that under the form of assertion they often propose inquiry;" and he remarks that many interpreted expressions in the first chapter of Genesis in a mystic sense †.

The advanced state of all physical studies in the middle ages has been briefly pointed out in the third book of this history. Albert the Great, receiving his sovereign during the depth of winter amidst trees loaded with fruits and flowers, is a fact not to be explained by crediting the injurious report of men who came long after him respecting his magical power. There must have been considerable optical science, when mirrors and painted images were made, by means of which figures could be shown in the air at moonlight, such as Cornelius Agrippa tells us had been formerly made by Pythagoras, and lately, too, witnessed by himself ‡. The same author speaks of perpetual lamps, and of unctions by means of which red-hot iron could be borne in the hands. An iron fly was shown to Charles V., which, "without aid of any one, took its gallant flight, made an entire round, and then, as if tired and endued with judgment, perched on his arm." Admirable, no doubt, were the scientific figures, the bronze speaking heads, and all the other mechanical subtilties which were contrived by Albert the Great, Michael Scot, Roger Bacon, Pope Sylvester, John Denys, and Francis Flussard de Candale, the Archimedes of Gascony.

* S. Basil Hexameron, Hom. i.

† Hugo S. Vict. de Sacramentis, lib. i. p. i. c. 2.

‡ Cornel. Agripp. de Occult. Philosoph. lib. i. c. 11. 1.

In allusion to such science, John Picus of Mirandula cites, among the moderns who study the occult mysteries of natural magic, Alchindus, Roger Bacon, and William of Paris *. These men could execute, too, as well as contrive; which at least ought not to be objected to them, since we are told by a great philosopher that early talent of this kind is a general prognostic of a true inductive genius. Gabriel Barrius says that he knew a priest, Jerome Faba of Cænisius in Calabria, a man of most holy life and not void of learning, who had nearly an universal genius, being skilled in the lowest and highest things, being a carpenter, painter, and sculptor, many of whose carved pieces were so admirable that they seemed miraculous to the Emperor Charles V. and to Philip King of Spain †. Still, it is true, the object in all investigations and collections of natural science was connected with the beatitude of the clean of heart. The mechanism of the clock of the cathedral of Cambrai, made in 1397, as it is said, by a shepherd, which showed the hour, day, and year, course of the sun and moon, was employed also when it struck in producing bronze figures representing a part of our Lord's passion, which came out in procession and moved on before the spectator till the number of strokes was completed. Similarly the study of minerals and stones was pursued in reference to the churches, or even to the conveyance of religious admonition by symbols; as when, King John, being a diligent examiner and collector of precious gems, Pope Innocent III. sent him a ring and sought to instruct him in his duty as a Christian, by turning to an allegorical sense the colours of its different stones ‡.

Still, as we before observed, however the study of the sciences may have been sanctioned and encouraged in the middle ages, there were some impediments in its way which in later times have been removed; for, to return to the remark of Cuvier, it is unquestionable that religious fervour and the high ascetic union of such multitudes of souls with God must have partially interfered with its cultivation. Many capable of making great advance might have exclaimed with Dante, after he had

* Apologia.

† Gabriel Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriae, lib. iii.

‡ Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. ii. 60.

seen Beatrice, or the supreme wisdom,—“How these things are, I know not; but mine eyes have now taken view of her by whom all other thoughts are barred admittance*.” Beyond doubt, many of the holy inhabitants of cloisters preferred to a proficiency in science the edification of the poor. Thus Vincent of Beauvais laments his having spent so much time and pains in the physical and medical part of his great work; “in which,” saith he, “as I neither feel satisfied myself, so do I fear I may have displeased both God and men; not that the things themselves are not good and useful to those who study them, but because it did not become my profession so diligently to apply to investigate and describe things of that nature†.” Generally, too, an intense application to natural philosophy was only deemed laudable when the farthest end was something different from the mere scientific result.

“Some,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “seek truth, and love to have it, on account of God; but yet they do not seek it on account of the supreme good. Such are they who investigate the secrets of nature, and are impelled by a strong desire that they may know what is true only in hidden things. In this, indeed, there is also what may justly delight them, provided that the heart of man, by that which it loves below, may be raised to the love of Him who is the supreme good‡.” “The first science arises from the vision of God, who is the fountain and origin of all the science which man possesses§.” It was this, and not the delusion of alchemy or magic, as some affirm, which animated the exertions of the noble and accredited philosophers of the middle ages in all their studies. The scientific investigator of nature would repeat, with no less fervour than the mystic theologian, the words of St. Augustin, “What shall I do that I may find my God? I will consider the earth; it is beautiful, but it has a Maker. Wondrous are the secrets of seeds and plants; but they have a Maker. I look at the vastness of the ocean: I am amazed: I seek its Maker. I behold the heaven, and I admire the beauty of the stars and the splendour of the sun: these things are wondrous,

* Purg. xxxii. † Vincent Bellov. Prolog. cxviii.

‡ Erudit. Theolog. ex Miscellan. lib. i. tit. 72.

§ Id. lib. iii. tit. 3.

they are to be praised; they are not earthly, they are even celestial; but yet my thirst is not satisfied;—I thirst after Him who made them. I return to myself, and I inquire, who am I who ask about such things? I find that I have a body and a soul; I perceive that my soul is better than my body, for it can command it, and the body only serves it; for when I looked at the earth and the sea and the sky, my eyes were only windows to my soul: it is something interior which sees, for when any one is absent in thought, in vain do the eyes open and glare. The God whom I seek is not to be sought for with the eyes. The soul, moreover, sees something by itself, which it does not perceive by the eyes, like colours, nor hear with the ears, like sounds, nor smell by the nostrils, like odours, nor feel by the touch, like bodies. What can this be? Take wisdom or justice: they have neither colour, nor sound, nor smell, nor can they be touched; and yet they are beautiful, and they are beheld by the soul. What did Tobias see, when, blind, he gave counsel of life to his son, who saw? There is, therefore, something which the mind, the ruler and inhabitant of the body, perceives without the instrumentality of the senses, but by itself; for it sees itself, by itself; and so far from needing the corporeal senses to know itself, it on the contrary tears itself away from them, as from so many impediments, that it may see and know itself by itself*.”

In a word, the blessed clean of heart saw God in creatures, and they studied even physical sciences, chiefly from a desire of fixing and extending that vision. And now, ere we advance further, returning from past to present time, let us direct our eyes downward, and contemplate what a world already stretched under our feet there lies: for how few, comparatively, are the persons living, who look around them with enthusiasm, and feel that they behold the Deity in the varied productions of his almighty power. With the Fathers of the Church and the masters of the school, the exercises even concerning bodies, were referred to incorporeal things. “It is the part of the more sublime reason,” says St. Augustin, “to judge of these corporeal things according to incorporeal

* Tractat. in Ps. 41.

and eternal reasons*.” But, as with the ancients, after the rise of Epicurism, so with the moderns after the rise of the new opinions, natural discipline, omitting all higher objects, was pursued only in reference to public or private physical utility, and physics became the study of bodies, for the sake of promoting the pleasures and advantages of men ; so that there is in effect a return to that spirit lamented by St. Chrysostom, when he says, that the rich, looking on their parks and mansions, repeat what the Apostles said on Thabor, “ bonum est nos hic esse.”

————— Studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
Unmindful of their Maker.

Nor is this all ; for how often is the investigation of natural philosophy pursued with a view not to strengthen, but to weaken moral truths, or rather to overthrow them ?

In the system which reduces the divine action to the mechanism of the universe, nature raises itself as a wall of brass between man and his Creator ; there is no communication between them—no active relation—no society of love, “ and deism,” as a French theologian remarks, “ is in fact, only the absence of the Deity, as atheism is the denial of his existence.” From this arguments are attempted to be gathered to deny the existence of the Deity—the immortality of the soul, and all religion, which is styled superstition, after the manner of the Epicureans of old, whose master says, “ having known the nature of all things, levamur superstitione, we are delivered from the fear of death : we are not disturbed by the ignorance of things from which those horrible fears are wont to arise.” A time there was when science and theology went hand in hand ; but now the natural philosopher goes out with the spirit of Cain into the fields of human speculation ; and if reminded from time to time of God, by his humble brother, who remains within the sanctuary, he will turn against him with bitter words of scorn, to tax him with servility, and become perhaps in moments of social convulsion, not his critic only, but his murderer. The race is of all times, but how is it multiplied of

* De Trin. lib. xii. c. 2.

late! "*Lingua eorum et adinventiones eorum contra Dominum **." The only reply which the scholastic philosophers would make to their objections, would resemble that of just reason in the ancient poem,

"Ω μοι μανίας τῆς σῆς, πόλειώς θ',
 "Ἦτις σε τρέφει
 Δυμαινόμενον τοῖς μεираκίοις†.

CHAPTER XII.

WE come now to consider how the clean of heart beheld God, in what appeared as deviations from the general laws, by which the visible world is sustained and governed, and 'his will lead us to remark some essential characteristics of the Catholic philosophy, by which it is distinguished from that of modern times. The way is already prepared for us, having seen its piety, humility, and Catholicity, for piety must recognize the agency of God, humility adore his absolute and ordinate power, and Catholicity admit the whole system of his manifestations. The piety of men in ages of faith led them to see not only the divine hand in the conduct of all human things in general, but also an especial providence guiding and determining events with relation to each individual. Without the clue, indeed, which supernatural light confers,

—————Full hard it is to read aright,
 The course of heavenly cause, or understand
 The secret meaning of th' eternal might,
 That rules men's waies, and rules the thoughts of living wight.

But for the clean of heart, even though their own fate might sometimes have been included among these divers obscure judgments, on which they had expressly treated, as in the instance of Gui de Roye, who, after composing the *Doctrinal de Sapience*, perished in a manner so tragical, and so unlike what any one could have anticipated †, there was an abundant vision. St. Augustin alludes to

* Is. ii.

† Nubes, 891.

‡ Berthier, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. xv. 236.

the disorders of human society, and says, "fire, hail, snow, ice, the spirit of whirlwinds accomplish his word." "It would be long to commemorate," he adds, "the apparent disorders in the world, which, by fools, are ascribed to chance, and by the wise to the word of God. Wherever he wishes the fire shines, and the clouds are borne, which bring either rain or hail. God knows what he is about, do you only fear and be good *."

"Who knows not," says Richard of St. Victor, "to what confusion is subject the various multiplicity and multitudinous variety of this visible machine, in which all things happen equally to the just and to the impious, to the good and to the evil, to the clean and to the unclean, to him who immolates victims, and to the despiser of sacrifice†." Yet so far from the perturbations of time rendering them insensible to the hand of Almighty Providence, in the conduct of nations, they affirmed that the history of the world is not comprehensible, without a government of the world.

St. Thomas remarks, that the Scripture, in order to shew that casual things proceed according to the order of a certain superior cause, saith, "time and chance are in all things under the sun," and not simply chance, because it is according to a certain order of time, that casual defects are found in these things; for according to one act of the government of God, things are differently governed according to their diversity; for some by their nature are self-agents, and these are governed by God no less, for they are moved by God operating within them, and persuading them to good, by precepts; and this is according to the perfection of his government, that some are used as instruments, in like manner as a master makes his pupils not alone to understand, but also to teach others †.

Hence, those solemn and curious reflections, so common in the middle ages, respecting the interposition of Providence in this life, as when the death of Emerick, king of Hungary, in 1204, was considered an indication of divine judgment, from his expiring on the same day on which the preceding year he had thrown his brother Andrew into prison, laden with chains, having caught

* Tract. in Ps. 148. † De Contemplat. P. l. lib. ii. c. 26.

‡ P. l. q. ciii. art. 5. 6.

him by stratagem*. Men of the spiritual life, who watched the events of the world, could recount many strange and admirable instances of this kind, and a book composed from their conversation, would have exhibited the action of Almighty God in a point of view that could not fail to excite love and reverence. Repeatedly they feel constrained to say these are not natural events; they strengthen from strange to stranger. Their thought was, therefore, that of Schelling, when he observed, in his lectures on Academic study, "that amongst the holy there is nothing holier than history—that great drama of the world—that eternal poem of the divine intelligence, from a consideration of which view Hurter applies to history, what Lord Bacon affirms of philosophy, '*Leviore res haustus avocant a Deo, planiores ad Deum reducunt.*'" Many of the expressions of this belief which had been remarked, as characterising the conversation of eminent men, are recorded by ancient writers. The Emperor Maximilian Second, we are told, used always to console and strengthen himself in affliction, by saying, "*Dominus providebit†.*" And Alphonso, the wise king of Arragon, to one who asked who was the happiest man, replied, him, I judge to be the happiest, who accepts all things which happen to him, no otherwise than as things done by God‡. In short, it was the spirit of these ages to recognise the hand of supreme mercy in all things, whether, as St. Chrysostom says, "the object of Providence could be discerned or not; whether the will of men co-operated or not, for it was well known that God confers many favours upon us against our will, and many which we do not know to be such at the time§."

"Our Lord," says St. Bonaventura, "may seem to sleep, as when with his disciples in the ship during the storm, which terrified them, and yet he does not the less attend to our safety||." "Born in turbulent times," says Cardan, "exposed to many vicissitudes, suffering from poverty, forced to travel so often with men not only aliens from religion, but also its enemies, it must be ascribed rather to a miracle than to wisdom, rather to

* Chron. Austral. Chron. Claustroneob.

† Drexelius de Conform. Hum. Volunt. cum Div. lib. v. 6.

‡ Panormitan in vita ejus.

§ Hom. Coloss.

|| Medit. Vitæ Christi, cxxi.

the divine assistance than to virtue, that I should not have been moved. But I was always most observant of religion, and the worship of God, mindful not alone of the divine majesty, but also of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of the blessed Martin, being admonished in a dream, that under his patronage I should lead a more peaceful life*." To men of such intellectual habits it used to seem as if God in the government of the world was pleased to attend even to many of those secret delicate harmonies between thought and things external, which the human mind delights to trace or to imagine, as when some holy person whose patron was St. Michael, and whose fervent vow through a long sickness, had been to obtain release upon his festival, would sweetly expire on that day, and at the moment when the Church was singing, in conspectu Angelorum Psallam tibi Deus meus.

There is no occasion, however, for producing instances of this spirit, as they may be found in every page of the ancient Catholic writings; but we may remark in passing that it was this habit of seeing God in all the events and affairs of the world, which rendered life in former times so full of high mystic inspiration, so poetical, so ideal. "Circumstance," which a modern poet styles, "that unspiritual God," was then a most fruitful source of spirituality; every act and turn was full of thought—full of mystery; the giving a cup of water—the doffing a cap in salutation—the lifting of an aventayle to greet some holy man—the holding a stirrup in a procession, was an intellectual act, associated with the love of Christ. Every one true to his profession deserved the appellation of Israel, the man seeing God, and might have said too, "vidi Dominum, et salva facta est anima mea †."

The justice of these views was evident indeed from faith, but considering them only with the eyes of a philosopher, it was deemed more wise to adopt the principles of the Stoics and Pythagoreans, than to confess one's self an Epicurean who held the contrary. In fact they were part of the great primeval traditions of mankind, conveyed in those noble fragments of ancient poesy which are so often cited by the early Fathers, as in the lines given by St. Clement of Alexandria—

* Hieron. Card. de Vita Propria, lib. ii. c. 22.

† Isidori Etymolog. lib. vii.

—— τὸν οὐδέποτ' ἔωμεν
 ἄρρητον, μεστὰ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγνιαὶ
 πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραὶ, μεστὴ δὲ θάλασσα
 καὶ λιμένες, πάντῃ δὲ Διὸς κεκρήμεθα πάντες *.

The study of etymology itself indicated the first notions of all people, for *θεός* seemed to be derived naturally from *θεάομαι*. The *Ὀλύμπου σκοποὶ* of Pindar †, and the Homeric expression of *πόποι* for *ἐπόποι* or *ἐπόπται* sufficiently evinced too what was the faith of the earliest times. What else was it but this tradition which the different philosophers taught, as when the Pythagoreans said that nothing happened by fortune, but that the providence of God determined every thing ‡: a conviction which Pindar, who belonged to that sect, introduces into his fifth Pythian ode—*παντὶ μὲν θεὸν αἴτιον ὑπερτιθέμεν* and which is delivered by Æschylus in all the characteristic majesty of his expressive style;

ἰὼ, ἦ διαὶ Διὸς
 παναιτίου πανεργέτα
 τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελεῖται;
 τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκραντόν ἐστιν §;

Hence Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in allusion to men who ridicule the belief of divine appearances ascribing them to human arrogance, and teaching that there is no providence, says, “those who profess this godless philosophy, if indeed one must call it philosophy ||.” The error of those naturalists, who look only to secondary causes, seems to have been so deeply estimated by Virgil—for, notwithstanding his supposed panegyric of Lucretius, his Anacerontic views of happiness ¶, and his Pantheistic notion **, I would be slow to believe him an Epicurean—that, after ascribing this impious speech to Palinurus,

“Magnanime Ænea, non, si mihi Jupiter auctor
 Spondeat, hoc sperem Italiam contingere cælo,”

he represents him as retaining the same mind even on

* Stromat. v. 14.

† Jamb. de Pythag. vita, cap. 28.

|| Antiq. Rom. lib. ii. c. 68.

** Æn. vi. 724.

† Olymp. 1.

§ Agam. 1485.

¶ Geor. iii. 6. 6.

the banks of Cocytus, still unable to recognize an ordaining intelligence ;—

“ ——— nec me Deus æquore mersit,
Namque gubernaculum multâ vi forte revulsum
Cui datus hærebam custos, cursusque regebam
Præcipitans traxi mecum *.”

Moreover, in ages of faith, it was a sign of the good spirit recognized by every one, to revere with sincere piety the saints reigning with God, and the servants of God still on earth † ; and this disposition prepared men for discerning the hand of the Creator stretched out to honour, in the eyes of men and angels, those who were found faithful.

But while the piety of the Catholic philosophy was thus, at all times, disposed to recognize the agency of God, its humility caused men to adore his power, and thus removed another great obstacle which prevents the impious and proud from beholding him in the more extraordinary acts of his almighty providence. The clean of heart, therefore, saw God in his miraculous operations amongst men. Here is a great difficulty for the moderns. “ We live in times,” says Berthier, “ when the wonderful, as soon as it presents itself, becomes an object of criticism. This is praiseworthy on many accounts : hence are prevented error, superstition, and fanaticism, the shameful effects of a precipitate admiration ‡. But,” continues this historian, “ in this, as in all other respects, criticism ought to be judicious, impartial, and attentive,” rules unhappily by which it has not been always directed in reference to the subject of this Chapter ; so that it is as much the language of the critics, as the object presented to them, which imperatively demands criticism. Let us hear them speak : “ These miracles,” says a late writer, “ are a terrible reproach to the Roman Catholic Church of the middle ages. Why did she sanction them ? Why require that miracles should precede canonization ? Why approve miracles at all ? Why not uniformly receive them with distrust ? They have indeed been long exploded, and for this we must thank the progress of knowledge.”

* VI. 348. † Bona de Discretionem Spirituum, c. 6.

‡ Discours sur la Pucelle d'Orleans.

Such are the questions and assertions of many at present, which one conversant with ages of faith may answer with a smile, as this other doubt which moves them is less harmful, for it brings no immediate peril of removing them from God. It is, however, a difficult pass for the faltering steps of some who would wish to follow, and we must endeavour to make it smooth for them; a formidable task if one much regards the rubrick of the Dresden Library, "*Philosophia falsa et fanatica*," supposing its particular application just. At all events it is one that ought not to be undertaken lightly, for it requires more reflection than most others devolving on an historian; and as Socrates says, "until we philosophize sufficiently, it will not be possible for any one to speak properly on any subject *."

Inaccuracy as to facts ought first to be corrected. The reproach then must not be limited to the Roman Church, or to the middle ages: miracles were uniformly received with distrust; and they have not been long exploded, since hardly a year passes without bringing conviction to the minds of many persons that miracles continue to take place. Hugo of St. Victor remarks, "that the apostle does not reprove the philosophers for having enquired into the nature of things, but for having endeavoured to confine the power of God, which is infinite, under the dominion of natural causes †."

The philosophy of the ages of faith, in lending a willing ear to the witnesses who attest instances of a supernatural and immediate interposition of divine agency, superseding and surpassing all the known power of physical secondary causes, evinced only a strict logical consistency with its own essential principles, which required it not to resist or question the power of Almighty God. In the first place the fact was so. This interposition did take place; or, as St. Thomas says, "God does produce sometimes the effects of secondary causes without them, or effects to which secondary causes do not extend ‡."

There was a mystic, supernatural, or miraculous side to all things, noticed in the preceding books of this history, to which I have seldom alluded, in order to accele-

* Phædo. † Hugo S. Vict. quæst. circ. Epist. ad Philippens.

‡ Sum. p. I. Q. cv. 6.

rate our course ; but of the reality of which I must now declare, once for all, my unlimited conviction. Yes, throughout these ages there were continually seen by the clean of heart miraculous gifts and manifestations of God * ; all is true of which we read in the lives of saints, so far as concerns the general fact, that they felt, heard, saw, and understood things beyond mortality. Without going back to primitive times to tell of what Cyprian, Marianus, Perpetua, and the holy martyrs saw before or during their passion, let those who would observe instances in proof, refer to what Goerres has collected from the lives of Mary of Agreda, Jerome Gratianus the Carmelite, Joseph of Cupertino, the Capuchin friar, Catharine of Sienna, and other canonized men and women of the middle ages alone †. I will not delay to notice the trivial phrases with which the Catholic belief on this head is chiefly assailed ; such as, “ Miracles are impossible ” — “ The age of miracles is passed ” — “ Miracles were invented by interested priests ; ” and such like : for as they rest on no ground of reason, it is for reason to despise them ; but if any thing sound like argument let us attend. “ If an eye-witness exist,” says a modern historian, “ he never as such (we confine our observations to the earlier ages of the church) alludes to miracles.” This would indeed be much, if there were much truth in it ; but what can be concluded from an assertion opposed to fact ? Let any one read the account which St. Augustin gives of the miracles which he saw with his own eyes wrought at Carthage and other places, and he will know how to estimate its value. The instances which St. Augustin relates in the twenty-second book of his *City of God*, are precisely similar to those which Catholics in all ages, as well as in our own, have believed were passing under their eyes. St. Irenæus reproaches the heretics against whom he writes, that they could not give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, or raise the dead to life, as he testifies was frequently done in the true church ‡. Tertullian § and St. Pacian || pursue the same line of argument. Miracles are attested by Theophilus of Antioch, Minutius Felix,

* Goerres *die Christliche Mystik*, passim. † 11. 83. 97. 101.

‡ *Cont. Hæres.* lib. ii. c. 31. § *Lib. de Præscrip.*

|| *Ep. ii. ad Symphon.*

Arnobius, Lactantius, St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome and others of the holy Fathers, and by a cloud of witnesses in long succession through the middle ages. St. Nicetas, bishop of Treves, in the sixth century, in order to convert her husband, Alboin king of the Lombards from Arianism, advises Queen Clodosind to induce him to send confidential messengers to witness the miracles wrought at the tomb of St. Martin, St. Germanus, or St. Hilary, adding, "Are such things done in the churches of the Arians*." About the same time, Levigild, king of the Goths in Spain, an Arian, who was converted or nearly so by his Catholic son St. Hermengild, reproached his Arian bishops that no miracles were wrought among them, as was the case, he said, among the Catholics†. The seventh century beheld the miracles of our apostle, St. Augustin of Canterbury, wrought in confirmation of the doctrine which he taught, as was recorded on his tomb‡. In the eleventh century we have no less a witness than Richard of St. Victor, who, speaking of the proofs of the Catholic religion, exclaims, "O Lord, if what we believe is an error, thou art the author of it, since it is confirmed amongst us by those signs and prodigies which could not be wrought but by thee§." St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. Francis Xavier, all appealed to the miracles which God wrought by their hands in proof of the Catholic doctrine. Those of St. Bernard in the twelfth century are innumerable, and nothing is deficient in the evidence by which they are attested. All France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, bore testimony to them; and prelates, princes, and the emperor himself, were often the spectators of them. In a journey which the saint made into Germany, he was followed by Philip, archdeacon of Liege, who was sent by Sampson, archbishop of Rheims, to observe his actions. This writer, accordingly, gives an account of a vast number of instantaneous cures which the holy abbot performed on the lame, the blind, the paralytic, and other diseased persons. Speaking of those wrought at Cologne, he says, "They were not performed in a corner, but the whole city was witness to them. If any one

* Labbe Concil. tom. v. p. 835.

† Greg. Turon. i. ix. c. 15.

‡ Bed. Eccles. Hist. i. ii. c. 3.

§ Ric. S. Vic. de Trinit. i.

doubts or is curious, he may easily satisfy himself on the spot, especially as some of them were wrought on persons of no inconsiderable rank*.” Preaching at Sarlat against the Henricians, he took some loaves of bread and blessed them; after which he said, “By this you shall know that I preach to you the true doctrine and the heretics a false doctrine, all your sick who shall eat of this bread shall recover their health:” which prediction was confirmed by the event†. St. Bernard himself, addressing Pope Eugene III, as also in his letter to the people of Thoulouse, refers to the miracles which God enabled him to work‡. But the reader should refer to the eloquent pages of Goerres for proof and illustration§. What might not be said also on the miracles of St. Francis Xavier, and on those of St. Philip Neri, St. Francis de Sales, St. John Francis Regis, and numberless others? At one time, two thousand persons afflicted with different maladies, came to the convent of the Recollects in Horta, to beseech Salvator, a poor Catalonian lay brother, to pray for them: after they had all made their confession and communion, he blessed them in the name of the holy Trinity, and they were all healed the same hour||. Twenty-two bishops of Languedoc wrote to Pope Clement XI. in these terms, “We are witnesses that before the tomb of Francis Regis, the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb speak.”

We need not multiply instances. Let us however hear St. Ouen, recording a miraculous cure in his own age, in verification of the divine promise, that he who believes in Christ shall do the works which he did; for the passage will shew the spirit with which all operations of this kind were believed to be effected. During the anniversary celebration of St. Denis at Paris, while vigils were chaunting in the choir, Eligius entered the temple, and saw a man with limbs contracted, lying at the sepulchre of the saint. Moved with charity, he went up and inquired from him how long he had been lame, and the cause of his disease, and asked him whether he had hope in Christ, if he believed that he could be cured, if he

* Mabill. † Geof. in vit. Bern.

‡ De Consideratione.

§ Die Christliche Mystik. 1. 251.

|| II. 212.

believed that he would rise from death and receive a recompense according to his works; and when the other replied that he believed all this, then said Eligius why do you lie here any longer—do you believe that this saint can obtain from God the cure of your malady? If then you do so believe, promise to the Lord that from henceforth you will serve him, and if you have firm faith the Lord will heal you. Then Eligius knelt upon the ground and prayed, with eyes and hands raised to heaven, calling upon our Saviour Jesus Christ: and then turning to the sick man he took him by the hand, and desired him to rise up in the name of Jesus, and the sick man immediately felt strength in his joints, and he arose and was healed from that hour.

Goerres has written a most remarkable chapter on the miraculous healing of the sick in general, in the Catholic Church*; but we cannot delay to hear it. I shall only observe that passages like the above, appeared to the count of Stolberg to contain the strongest internal evidence of truth. When relating the answer of Pope Gregory to St. Augustin, who had sent him an account of the miracles which he had wrought in England, this profound philosopher says, “it seems to me that the Apostolic manner in which Gregory regarded miracles, places beyond a doubt the authenticity of those which he records as having occurred in his time†.” The point of attack will now perhaps be changed, and we shall be told that eye-witnesses cannot be credited when they affirm that they have seen such things.

“They had a passage for a time will some one say,” quoting Lord Bacon, “by the ignorance of the people, the superstitious simplicity of some, and the politic toleration of others, and came to be esteemed but as old wives’ fables, impostures of the clergy, and badges of Antichrist.” This is a side on which the ancient philosophers would not have ventured to make an assault. “It cannot be,” says Plato, “that faith ought not to be placed in the sons of the Gods, even although they may speak without probable and invincible demonstrations.” “Truly,” says Socrates, “it is not easy to refuse assent to what Simonides says, for he is a wise and a divine

* Die Christliche Mystik, i. 385. † Life of Alfred, chap. 3.

man*.” What then would these philosophers have thought of persons, who should refuse to credit such men as St. Bernard and St. Francis Xavier, and refuse too on the very ground of their being divine men? Yet this is the argument of the moderns. “Men were religious,” say they, “and anxious to uphold religion by every means; or they were religious, and therefore liable to delusions.” Another difficulty presents itself to them. “If miracles did take place, all the world, they conclude, would have known it, and every one would have heard of it.” But can they be so sure of this? Here, again, facts overthrow their arguments. Immediately before attesting as an eye witness, the miracles which had been lately wrought, St. Augustin says, “miracles are now indeed wrought by his name, by the sacraments or prayers, or by the memorials of his saints; but they are not illustrious with the same brightness as those related in the gospels, because the canon of the holy Scriptures being spread every where and recited, all nations know them; but when these miracles occur, they are scarcely known in the very city itself in which they pass, for generally very few persons know of them, the rest being ignorant of their occurrence, especially if it be a great city, and when they are related to others elsewhere, there is no such authority to substantiate them as to make them to be credited without doubt or difficulty, although they are related by faithful Christians to faithful Christians†.”

Might not one suppose that this referred to what was every day passing in our own times in various parts of Europe? The same apathy appeared during the middle ages. Wandalbert, deacon and monk of Prumens, writing in the ninth century, says in the prologue to his life of St. Goar, addressed to the abbot Marcuard, “to attest the merits of the saints, so many miracles continue to be wrought, as in the first ages, that in consequence of their frequent occurrence, men no longer regard them with admiration‡.” Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, says in the prologue to his book on Miracles, “that he used often to feel indignant that no one should ever think of writing down a record of the miraculous events which were occurring in his time, and that it was that

* De Repub. i.

† De Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. 8.

‡ Acta S. Ord. S. Bened. tom. ii.

consideration which tempted him to set about removing the deficiency *.”

Sometimes a fear of offending God by silence compelled men to speak of miracles, which fell under their own observation. “Thus,” one ancient writer says, “it would be tedious to relate each of the miracles and wonders that God has wrought in this monastery of König Sael, in Prague, since its foundation: many are written, but more have been omitted and have perished from the memory of men; yet some things which I have myself seen, and which have been proved perfectly by others, and which I dare not pass over, and cannot with a safe conscience, I will note here, for I have been in this monastery from my youth †.”

“I certainly think,” says Marsilius Ficinus, “that to us undeserving, certain miraculous signs have been divinely given, often in various places, but all things are not shown to all; many also are not written down, or if written, are not credited, in consequence of some wicked and detestable men imitating miracles. I have heard of some miracles in our own time, and in our city of Florence, which are to be believed. Do not be surprised my Lorenzo, that Marsilius Ficinus, studious of philosophy, should introduce miracles; for the things of which we write are true, and it is the duty of a philosopher to confirm every thing by its own proper kind of argument ‡.” While history attests the fact, philosophy and faith explain why miracles should not excite a more general and permanent impression. “What is astonishing amongst men, with respect to miracles,” says Cardan, is the fact, “that when they are present, or a little after they have occurred, the whole man is attracted by them, but when grown cold, they are so attenuated, that unless you firmly fix and restore them as if with a nail, you will as it were doubt, whether you have seen or heard them. Quod reor maxime tum ob alias causas multo profundiores, accidere quam naturæ nostræ distantia à causis quæ illud efficiunt §.” To silence respecting miracles,

* De Mirac. lib. i.

† Gaspar Jongelinus Notitiæ Abbot. ord. Cisterciens. per Univ. Orb. lib. v. 30.

‡ Mars. Ficin. de Christiana Religione, cap. x.

§ Hieron. Cardan de Vita Propria, cap. 43.

innumerable causes contributed. It would, perhaps, be difficult to describe the intellectual effects resulting from them, in terms more exact than those of Plato, where he gives this caution. “Beware, lest such things should be produced before undisciplined men; for, as it seems to me, than these no things sound more ridiculous to the common mass of mankind, or more admirable and full of divinity to those who are well constituted, *σχεδὸν γὰρ, ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, οὐκ ἔστι τούτων πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς καταγελαστότερα ἀκούσματα, οὐδ’ αὖ πρὸς τοὺς εὐφνεῖς θαυμαστότερα τε καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικώτερα* *.

The clean of heart in ages of faith, were impressed with the conviction expressed by Pindar, “that not every truth revealing its countenance clearly is profitable, and that the knowing how to keep silence is often the wisest thing among men †.” They would, therefore, preface their account of miracles with “let it dwell darkly with you;” and, in fact, Guibert de Nugent will bear witness, that in the eleventh century there were in England some persons as ready to discredit miracles, and to impute them to artifice, as any that could now be found there, though it is true he represents them as men addicted to drunkenness, of no understanding in regard to the mysteries of God, and closing their course of audacious impiety by a bitter end, imitating Judas in their death ‡. Many motives indeed rendered the clean of heart willing, rather to rest in the assurance of almighty power than to be the heralds, or even witnesses of its demonstration. Mabillon shews that the clergy of the seventh and eighth centuries were studious to conceal the event of any miracle which had been wrought in their churches; he cites a remarkable instance from the acts of St. Hildulf, of the bishop of Treves, and abbot of the Medianensian monastery, respecting their conduct, in consequence of the crowd of persons who were attracted thither by the frequent miracles of St. Spinulus, lest they should be withdrawn from the royal road of regular discipline. Similar examples occurred at Rheims and at Clairvaux. The Sarlatensian monks being disturbed by the multitude of people, who came to the shrine of the holy abbot Pardulf, to witness the miracles, they actually translated

* Epist. ii.

† Nem. od. v.

‡ Guibert Novigent. de Vita Propria, lib. iii. c. xi.

the abbot's body into the church of St. John, without the monastery, that the crowd might be directed elsewhere. The abbot Rodulfus, in the first book of his *Chronicle*, after relating that in the last years of the life of the abbot Guntram, frequent miracles were wrought at the tomb of Lord Trudo, says that the abbot studiously endeavoured to conceal them, and alleged this reason, that signs were given to infidels, and not to the faithful, "which not long after," says the *Chronickler*, "some of ourselves experienced, who, in presence of these very miracles, did not fear to offend God*."

Peter the Venerable says, "that many miracles and extraordinary events were occurring in the holy order of the Carthusians, but that the humility of those saintly men made it very difficult to obtain information respecting them†." The *Recollets* of Horta brought a complaint before the provincial of their order against Salvator, the lay brother, in consequence of the miraculous cures which he performed; the peace of their convent was disturbed by the multitudes, who flocked to see him. The provincial commanded that his name should be changed, and that he should be sent at midnight to another monastery: popular commotions followed; he was removed successively to Barcelona, Saragossa, and the island of Sardinia, the people every where still discovering him, as if by instinct, while he continued healing all their diseases till his death, which occurred in the year 1567‡. It was nothing new in England in the twelfth century, as a recent historian of the middle ages supposes, to evince a disposition rather to conceal than to publish miracles. This writer admits, that such a spirit existed long before on the continent. "The more aged monks of several monasteries," he says, "had received with coldness the intelligence of miraculous manifestations, even when they, as a community, must of necessity profit by them. They contended that tranquillity, seclusion, and prayer, were the first obligations of a monk; but how could these obligations be fulfilled

* Præfat. in III. Sæcul. Benedict. § vii.

† De Miraculis, lib. ii. c. 29.

‡ Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 212.

if crowds of people were to flock daily to visit the shrine of a sainted inmate *?"

Moreover, faith, as we shall see at the close of this volume, imparted a vision to the clean of heart, which obscured the lustre of miracles, and rendered them even unwilling to behold them. Voltaire said he would go to the world's end to see a miracle; but when he had beheld one, there is no great probability that it would have effected any prodigious change in his psychological condition. It is by no means certain, that he would have obtained a mind like that of St. Louis, who did not wish to see a miracle. Joinville ascribes to the count of Montfort the answer which others attribute to that holy king, who, on being invited to remove to a distance of a few miles to see a miraculous host, replied, that he had no need of miracles to believe in the real presence. Such was the spirit of men in ages of faith. St. John of the Cross, in like manner, declined going to see a nun at Lisbon, who was said to be miraculously inspired, saying, "I want no fresh motives of credibility; they would diminish the merit of my faith little as it is; it is enough for me to know what Jesus Christ teaches, and what our holy mother, the Roman Church, which cannot deceive, proposes to us." "It is related of a certain holy Father," says St. Bonaventura, "that when the devil appeared to him in the form of Christ, he shut his eyes and said that he did not wish to see Christ in this life †." St. John of the Cross would not suffer spiritual persons to indulge in the desire of witnessing miraculous operations, and he used to cite St. Thomas, whose maxim was, that the desire of visions and other signs is a want of faith ‡, an observation verified, perhaps, more remarkably at present, in these grand expounders of the apocalypse, who are always pretending to discover the times and the seasons, as if they fancied themselves prophets. The scholastic and mystic guides of the middle ages used to warn men to refrain from inquiries respecting the end of the world, and the coming of Antichrist, lest they should evince the presumption which was reproved by our Saviour §.

* Lardner's Cyclop. vol. iv. 76.

† III. Sent. d. 5.

‡ III. P. Q. 43. art. 1. ad. 3.

§ St. Bonavent. de Sept. Grad. vit. Spiritual. cap. 79.

The belief of men in the reality of miracles, however, was not the less stedfast, in consequence of their rejecting the spirit of curiosity in matters of faith; and it only remains to shew that the very Catholicity of their views obliged them to possess it, since they could not entertain doubts respecting their possibility, without taking a partial view of human and divine things. Their histories, we are told, are full of attestations of strange, amazing instances of the immediate interference of God in the affairs of men; they abound with wonders. The reply of these authors to such objectors would, I think, have been very short. They would have deemed it sufficient to repeat Pindar's words, Ἡ θαυματὰ πολλὰ *. We deny it not. The life of man is full of wonders. Theirs was strictly in this respect the Platonic style. "What you say seems most incredible; but, nevertheless, it is necessary to admit it †." I said in the beginning that the clean of heart saw God, in the apparent deviations from the laws of nature; for, in fact, what ground have we for considering miracles as different from the other manifestations of the Supreme Ruler? It is in appearance, not in reality, that they differ from his ordinary laws of action. Plato speaks of it as a kind of blasphemy, to talk like ignorant people, of wandering stars, alluding to celestial bodies, as if they did not follow a certain law, whereas each has its appointed course; and his remark is applicable to miracles, "for, if," saith he, "in the Olympic games, those who follow the longest course should be called the slowest, because they are not in with those who take a shorter way, would it not be an injustice and an error? and when we err in the same manner speaking of divine things, are we not ridiculous and blind ‡?"

We may not be able to trace the connection, but it is in the order of Providence that such effects should be produced from time to time, without the co-operation of secondary causes. With respect to that general incredibility of all miracles which some imagine, the objection hardly deserves a reply. "Neither are they to be heard," says St. Augustin, "who deny that the invisible God can work visible miracles since he made the world §." What insane arrogance, or rather indeed what a want of thought,

* Olymp. i.

† Leges, lib. vii.

‡ De Legibus, lib. i.

§ De Civ. Dei, lib. x. 12.

when man refuses to believe that miracles can occur. It was but as yesterday that the oldest came into the world from which he will, as it were in a moment, be taken to the invisible world; and during the short space which intervenes, though he can trace the operation of general laws, he cannot be sure that he has discovered a thousandth part of their number, or that the most apparently trivial and isolated fact does not arise from the action of a general law, of which he knows nothing: even during this moment of observation, while drawing breath between two eternities, the commonest thing is quite as strange as the uncommonest, only habit blunts his sense. Therefore, after shewing how few common things can be perfectly explained, St. Hilary exclaims, "O man! why so much resignation in thy ignorance, when it is respecting the things which thou touchest? Why so much insolence when the question is concerning what relates to the nature of God *?" "If we should wish," says a German philosopher, "to do away with all miracles, at which the people wonder, whether it be extraordinary things, or things of which we cannot understand the connection, yet nature herself is full of miracles, and the real existence of things is to us a miracle." "The first man," says Novalis, "is the first seer of spirits; to him every thing appears as spirit. What are children but first men? The fresh glance of the child is more abundant than the perception of the most penetrating seer †."

In the order of grace, things equally wondrous are happening around us every day, only they strike us not, because we regard them with fleshly eyes, obscured by habit, and not with those of faith. All that appears so admirable in the lives of the saints, might be found in actual operation at present, if men had not learned the art of plucking the soul out of all human things; the same events take place, but are designated by different expressions. Neither can it be denied that the clean of heart beholding God, saw more, believed more than other men, and that they wished others to see and believe with them. One of the rules of Picus of Mirandula is, *De Deo credere omnia summa, idemque cupere ut omnes credant*. They did not write like the moderns, because they doubted and disbelieved, but they might have said, with holy

* De Trin. lib. ii.

† Schriften, ii. 291.

David, "Credidi, propter quod locutus sum." Physical science even warned philosophers from distrusting what such men saw, on the ground that it was not revealed to fleshly eyes. "All true things in the world are invisible," says Marsilius Ficinus, "all visible things in the world are only shadows of things *." "The unknown holy world," as Novalis remarks, "the higher world, is nearer to us than we commonly suppose. Already here we live in it, and we see it interwoven with the earthly nature †." *Ubi cor, ibi oculus*—where the heart was in heaven, the eyes saw God. "Proud and animal men," says Louis of Blois, "not perceiving or understanding the things which are of the spirit of God, condemn these holy books, and say that these revelations are only the dreams of women: for they know not with what familiarity God joins himself to the humble soul, as appears in the books of the blessed virgins, and widows, Gertrude, Mechtild, Hildegard, Elizabeth, and Brigit."

The clean of heart in ages of faith felt that the city of God on earth was as manifestly filled with the divine presence, as in the days of its first establishment. St. Augustin had addressed this admonition to the Church: "*Ne putes te desertam quia non vides Paulum, quia non vides Petrum, quia non vides illos per quos nata es. De prole tua crevit tibi paternitas; pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii, constitues eos principes super omnem terram.*" In effect the subsistence of the Catholic Church around them was a standing miracle, no less wondrous than those which first were wrought to make manifest the Son of God. The reply which Dante made to a blest spirit, who asked how he knew that the miracles were such as they are said to have been, might have been extended to express this: "that all the world," said he, "should have been turned to Christian, and no miracle been wrought,"

Would, in itself, be such a miracle,
The rest were not an hundredth part so great ‡.

That all nations should have been preserved in one religion, that a unity of spirit, a unity of doctrines should have been maintained so long, and men innumerable with

* Epist. lib. vi. ad Lacteri Neronio.

† Schriften, ii. 180. ‡ Par. xxiv.

angel minds have believed that miracles were wrought around them, and no miracle been wrought, would have been not indeed a miracle in Christian sense, but the marvellous of Calvin, that is to say, an absolute impossibility.

“He is wise,” exclaims Pindar, “who knows many things by nature, but they who learn by means of labour and application are vehement in garrulity, and like crows caw out vain things against the divine bird of Jove *” The Pythagorean poet seems to have had a deeper meaning than Aristides of Miletus supposes, who comments upon the passage. There is a fountain of analogies for the universe, and those whom grace divine, under any form, had guided in the contemplation of nature, have discovered it, without forfeiting the character which Pliny so admired in a student, “*quanta in sermone cunctatio!*” while self-sufficient curious observers, who seem to think with Anaxagoras of old, that the wisdom and understanding of men result from their having hands †, who say miracles are past, and with the same breath, perhaps, as philosophical persons make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless, require continually to hear the count’s admonition to Bertram, “be check’d for silence, but never tax’d for speech.” “In the writings of the former,” as Novalis remarks of many old books, “there beats a mysterious pulse, which shews the point of contact with the invisible world.” Evidently as the clean of heart advanced on the way of this mortal life, they grew more full of incredibility as respected men, and more full of confidence in God. Many things passed around them—many things they heard, they saw, which, as St. Augustin says of the time when God creates human souls, “they would much rather learn than presume to teach.” “If their reason could not at all times instantly refute,—their faith,” as St. Augustin says, “enabled them to despise the objections of the impious ‡, while guarding with a pious mind the precepts of the blest.”

Εὐσεβεῖ γνώμα φυλάσσο-
τες Μακάρων τελετάς §.

* Olymp. ii.

† Plutarch de Amicit. 2.

‡ De Civ. Dei, xii. 17.

§ Olymp. iii.

Ancient authors desire us to mark the two questions addressed to the angel, and their different reception: Zacharius said, "whereby shall I know this?" for there are circumstances to make me believe this cannot be. Here, say they, is the pride of knowledge, and a dependance on philosophy; but Mary said fearfully, and in doubt, what manner of salutation this could be—how shall this be? She seeks not knowledge, but to have her alarm dispelled and her modesty preserved. Boyle has entitled one of his essays thus remarkably—"of man's great ignorance of the uses of natural things; or that there is no one thing in nature whereof the uses to human life are yet thoroughly understood," yet the garrulous men whom Pindar compares to crows, reject miracles, because, they say, they cannot see their use—they cannot believe that the Divinity would interpose for purpose unimportant; but their ridicule of Catholics only proves their own inconsistency, and alarms not its objects, for they can say, with St. Augustin, "*in ipsum Christum non crederemus, si fides nostra similes cachinnos metueret* *." Did not Almighty God exert his omnipotence, for what appears a trifle, when he filled the widow's cruse with oil †? The gentle Champier supplied them with an answer, when, in his doctrinal of a father training his son to all perfection, he says of those who pry into divine secrets,

"Las! nous pauvres créatures
Folles, corruptibles ordures,
N'appartient en nulle manière
Que de rien que Créateur fasse
Nul ayt si hardye face
Que la cause en rien enquierre."

"The will of God ought to suffice to us for reason," says St. Anselm, "when he does any thing, although we may not be able to discern why he so wills †." We cannot see what object could be answered by the miracles recorded in the history of the ages of faith; but can we see the object answered by every part of the visible nature around us? Doubtless, we should find that important ends are produced by the meanest particle of creation, if we could only see the totality, but, as Mon-

* Epist. 102.

† Reg. ii. 4.

‡ Cur. Deus Homo, 8.

taigne says, "man knows the whole of nothing." The most strange manifestation of Almighty power attested in records, can never be rejected as incredible, on philosophical grounds, on the score of its apparent inutility, for the true philosopher would only ask with Dante, "Is this

A preparation, in the wondrous depth
Of thy sage counsel, made for some good end,
Entirely from our reach of thought cut off*?"

If, like Hiero, the chatterer had asked the man of faith how such things were done? He, in turn, I think, would have asked the delay of Simonides before answering; or rather he would have said, it is sufficient that they were done. "Who are we," asks St. Augustine, "to dispute about the works of God, and to say wherefore this and that? this is ill—this is wrong. If you enter into an iron forge you do not dare to criticise the anvil, or the bellows; but, if without skill in that trade, the mere consideration of man induces you to say, "not without some cause are these things thus arranged, the artist knows wherefore, though I know not. In a forge you would not dare to condemn the workman, and in the world you dare to reprehend God †?"

The character of the true philosopher, we are told by a man of illustrious name in science in modern times, is to hope all things not impossible, and to believe all things not unreasonable. He who has seen obscurities, which appeared impenetrable in physical and mathematical science, suddenly dispelled, and the most barren and unpromising fields of inquiry converted, as if by inspiration, into rich and inexhaustible springs of knowledge and power on a simple change of our point of view, or by merely bringing to bear on them some principle which it never occurred before to try, will surely, we may affirm, from the principles of this philosopher, be the very last to acquiesce in any of the modern objections to the belief of the clean of heart in ages of faith, on the ground of its admitting the reality of miraculous operations. The Pythagoreans esteemed as fools the men who were incredulous, and who supposed that God could do

* Purg.

† Tract. in Ps. 148.

some things but not others. They used frequently to repeat the beginning of an heroic poem ascribed to Linus:—

*"Ἐλπεσθαι χροὴ πάντ' ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδέν ἄελπτον·
Ῥάδια πάντα θεῶν τελέσαι, καὶ ἀνήνυτον οὐδέν.**

To disbelieve nothing wonderful that may be related of the Gods, or concerning the divine doctrines†, was one of their symbolic maxims, which Pindar proclaims with a tone of personal conviction, saying, "To me nothing that is wonderful, done by the divine power, seems incredible‡." Such was the spirit of the wisest men in the ancient world. We may truly apply Cicero's words to these views, and say, "*vetera jam ista, et religione omnium consecrata;*" and certainly it is not from the Christian revelation that men of these latter times have learned to hold a different language, and to adopt instead that questioning spirit evinced by the Jews of Capernaum, when Christ first announced to mortal ears the great mystery of his love. Formerly, as Aristarchus said, there were hardly seven wise men in the world; but at present, as in his time, the difficulty would be to find seven who are content to pass for common mortals. The boasted diffusion of intelligence seems to consist in every one preferring his own incredulity to the faith of many generations of the human race, and feeling that it would be a disparagement of his understanding to suppose that he could credit any history attesting a miraculous event. Yet it was not from having never weighed such objections, but from having duly estimated them, that the great men of former ages refused to subscribe to the modern opinions. St. Augustin knew the men well, "*quibus tota regula credendi est consuetudo cernendi;*" and to go back farther still, the sages of Greece rejected them as crimes. "It is the custom of the wicked," said Empedocles, "to wish to vanquish truth by incredulity."

Indeed, when heathens, who knew not God, could yet discern the intimate relation in which all things in this visible frame of nature stood to him, there is but little

* Jamb. de Pyth. Vita, cap. 28.

† Jamblich. Adhort. ad Philos. cap. 21. ‡ Pyth. od. X.

ground for boasting of an intellectual progress, in the fact that, after the light of Christ has risen, philosophers persuade themselves that He, who makes it his delight to be with the children of men, and whose mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him, must have confined all his favours to the saints of the ancient law. Assuredly, as Touron remarks, it is not consistent with the principles of a Christian to deny, without examination of evidence, the truth of such records as those which attest the graces vouchsafed to the Angel of the School.

“I cannot believe,” you say, “that he heard a divine sound conveying ideas to his intelligence, or that any mortal could behold the spirits of another world and hear that indescribable voice which came, it is said, to Jerome Gratian the Carmelite while reciting matins*.” I cannot believe that prayer should work miracles. I cannot believe that the touch of relics, vestments, or medals should cure a diseased limb.” “What meanest thou?” would men of faith have said in answer; “What can thy words avail? They cast on all things surest, brightest, best, doubt, insecurity, astonishment.” Truly, of these men, who thus exalt incredulity into a principle, one might affirm in the language of the poet,—

*οὐ δὴ τις αἶα τοῦτ' ἐπεύχεται γένος
τρέφουσ' ἀνατεί, μὴ μεταστένειν πόνων †.*

No land ever boasted of having nourished such a race without finding, in the end, cause for bitter groans.

But what then? Are all the recorded miracles of the middle ages to be credited; and is every miracle to be believed because it is not impossible? The clean of heart, in ages of faith, were placed in no such dilemma. Their maxim was thus expressed by Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remi, “vitium est omnibus credere et nulli †.” This will appear from only reading the judicious remarks of Touron, on the golden legend of James de Voragine. The illustrious Berenger de Landere, general of the Dominicans in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and archbishop of Compostello, commissioned Bernard Guido to separate the fables from the truth in

* Bona de Discretionem spirituum, viii. † Æsch. Eumen. 58.

‡ Epist. lib. vii. 9.

this collection, which was a mere compilation from ancient legends. Melchior Canus attacked it severely; and his critical remarks on legends in general are well deserving of perusal *: At the same time it is improbable that the favour obtained by this work was owing to its relations being credited: its merit was understood to consist chiefly in its allegorical nature; so that when reduced to history, in a corrected edition, it was no longer sought after.

We must however observe, that, in the middle ages, men complained loudly that some legends were superstitiously written. Guibert de Nogent, in the eleventh century, speaks of false narratives, and of true legends, which are written in such a patched and hobbling style, that they are believed to be false. "What edification," he exclaims, "can the rotation of these fables, worse than any screeching wheels, bring to pious ears, which even can suggest incentives of blasphemy to the impious †?" Mabillon complains, in like manner, of innumerable little narrations inserted by modern writers into the lives of saints, the extravagance of which is, to his mind, a subject of excessive grief ‡. No doubt, as a recent historian remarks, many absurd accounts, which disfigure the histories of eminent saints, and which are not found in the contemporary writers, were the invention of men in subsequent times. This arose from error rather than from a wish to adorn. "With respect to these legends," says this historian, "charity is the best philosophy. Many were not known during the lives of the persons whose deeds they recount; after their deaths they were multiplied and disfigured." In the ancient lives of St. Romain, bishop of Rouen, there is no mention of his vanquishing a serpent: not even writers of the twelfth century allude to it; but as his victory over idolatry was represented under that symbol, later authors mistook the emblem for a reality. Similarly the Parisians, in later ages, supposed that St. Marcel had slain a dragon, being misled by the ancient symbolical representations of his triumphs over Satan. In the old lives of St. Remi there is no notice of the saint Ampoule, which

* De Locis Theolog. lib. ii. c. 10.

† Guibert Nov. de Pignoribus Sanct. lib. i. c. 1.

‡ De Studiis Monast. p. 11. c. 8.

was not mentioned till after four hundred years. So also, in the ancient lives of St. Denis, there is no account of his carrying his head, which was first mentioned by Hilduinus about seven hundred years after his time *. Another modern historian, after showing that no intimation of many strange things in the life of St. Dunstan occurs in the more ancient writings, which minutely record his acts and miracles, concludes with this remark, "The truth is, that nobody would ever have thought of disregarding the canons of criticism, of passing over writers nearly contemporary to follow those much posterior, had not the latter offered some foundations, however frail, for an attack on this calumniated archbishop." No one produced the original records.

The Saxon annalist says, "In this year all the chief nobility of England fell at Calne from an upper floor, except the holy Archbishop Dunstan, who was standing on a beam; and some were much maimed, and some did not escape with life." Such is the foundation for the charge echoed by modern writers, who accuse him of murder, and of pretending a miraculous interposition in his own favour. It can be hardly necessary to add, that the credibility of any particular miracle was estimated according to the weight of evidence in its support. None were received as genuine by the ecclesiastical authority, excepting after the most impartial and rigid scrutiny.

The Irish synod of the eighth century went so far as to say, "The testimony of a woman is not to be received, as the apostles did not receive the testimony of women respecting the resurrection of Christ †." "Some see visions in their imagination," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "and some pretend that they see visions; in some they are the preludes of insanity, and in others they arise from a confusion of the senses, which makes them believe truly that they see something when they see nothing: and when visions are true, they prove no man holy; for otherwise Balaam would have been holy, and his ass too, which saw the angel ‡." "Charity," says Richard of St. Victor, "humility, patience, and the other virtues, make man perfect—not miracles §."

* Floquet, *Hist. du Privilège de St. Romain*.

† *Lib. xvi. cap. 3. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. ix.*

‡ *Serm. x.*

§ *In Can. Cantic.*

The prudence with which mystical authors guarded the mind from all delusion connected with a groundless belief in particular revelations, may be witnessed in the spiritual works of the blessed John of the Cross, the first barefooted Carmelite, and the director of St. Theresa. Gerson *, Picus of Mirandula †, Cardinal Laurentius Brancatus ‡, Cardinal Bona §, Castaldo de Alassio ||, Joannes Rusbroch ¶, Henricus of Urimaria **, Dominicus Gravina ††, Thyraeus ††, and Goërres §§, have all written to explain on what ground the belief in divine visions may be secure.

Guibert de Nogent, in the eleventh century, while attesting that he had seen with his own eyes many prodigies performed by Louis VI., curing scrofulous bodies on the neck and other parts with his touch added to the sign of the cross humbly made, and observing that the power had been lost by his father Philip through his sins, takes care to show at length how little argument can ever be drawn from miracles |||. Every one was free to exercise his own judgment respecting each occurrence, and it is highly improbable that any were generally admitted as miraculous upon insufficient grounds. A late French writer remarks, that King Charles III. of Spain, whom no one could suspect of credulity, was firmly convinced of the miraculous liquefaction of St. Januarius's blood at Naples, from his having expressly made it the object of his study while reigning in that city ¶¶. The same result is continually obtained; but if what the Psalmist saith, in passing, of every man, were proved tomorrow, by a deliberate verdict, true of all whom Naples hath seen for centuries past encircling her altars, we should still have to recur to Pindar's conclusion; for after all our criticism and mockery we can never reverse it:—*Ἡ θάνατος πολλὰ*. Yes, let science recognize its bounds. There are pro-

* De Distinctione Visionum.

† De Fide.

‡ De Oratione.

§ De Discretionem Spirituum.

|| De Potestate Angelica.

¶ De Ornat. Spirit. Nupt. ii.

** De Spiritibus.

†† Lapis Lydius.

‡‡ De Apparit.

§§ Die Christ. Mystik. ii. 380.

|||| De Pignoribus Sanct. i. c. 1.

¶¶ Tableau de l'Espagne, ii. 314.

blems to solve which humility and love alone can supply the artifice, when we are called to see what of his grace high God hath willed.

CHAPTER XIII.

HAVING shown that the blessed clean of heart beheld God in the extraordinary manifestations which all history attests, we enter upon a path which is far from presenting an agreeable vista; for we are to inquire respecting men who, though evidently impure and ignorant, no less sought and professed to behold Him in operations of a supernatural order: and for this purpose we must engage in a brief investigation of the superstitions of the middle age—a complicated and even dangerous subject, yet, strange to confess, inviting, like those waters of the Mincio, which from a distance are so tempting to the eyes of youth upon a sultry day, but into which, upon approaching, we almost fear to plunge, so dark and interwoven are the tall entangled reeds which line the Mantuan shore.

In the Sixth Book we refuted the charge of superstition advanced against the morality of the ages of faith; and our present task is to explain in what manner the superstitions relative to the belief of men, which unquestionably then existed, can be reconciled with the action of that philosophy which no less incontestably prevailed at the time.

The question here is confined within narrow limits, and might be dismissed after a few words; since the only point for us to prove is the repugnance of the Catholic philosophy to all superstition, which assuredly could be done without engaging in a long discourse. But as the objects that must necessarily come into view are in themselves curious, and capable of imparting much instruction relative to the general history of the human mind, it will be well perhaps to remain for a short space upon this ground, and to explore a little through its

darksome wilds, though it will lead us far from the beatitude of the holy.

There have been, from the earliest ages of the world, two races of men, and, if one may so express it, two kinds of faith and mysticism corresponding to them: the workers of evil, believing in the power of evil, and worshipping it; the workers of good, believing in the supreme good, and adoring it. To both was common the desire of beholding a power superior to their own, and supreme. The pure and the impure sought to behold their God: the former to behold Him from whom they derived all sanctity, truth, and justice; the latter his antagonist, or him who was the source of that wide and terrible dominion which is founded upon evil.

Man in his freedom, placed between the two kingdoms, finds in the good congenial with his original nature bonds which connect him with the realm of light, and in sin which has been introduced into his nature others which associate him with the powers of darkness. The choice he makes between moral light and darkness determines whether it be to the demoniac or to the divine mysticism that he devotes his life: if he choose the good, then the mysticism of light flows to him from a divine source; if it be the bad on which his election falls, then he sinks down by a precipitous descent ever lower and lower to the abyss. In the event of the former choice, how he endeavoured to attain to this vision, we have already partly seen; in that of the latter, how he proceeded in the hope of realizing his wishes, can only be learned from penetrating into the sombre depths of those hideous histories which record the demoniac traditions of the impious, and the misery of those generations which felt their power; for, as from the good choice resulted religion and true philosophy, so from the evil arose idolatry, sorcery, and all the horrid rites and detestable errors which are eminently found in the history of Pagan times, and which can be met with likewise in all ages and under all circumstances wherever the true worship of God and the true philosophy have been abolished or interrupted. Faith and superstition are therefore not, as is often supposed by superficial writers, analogous and friendly, but, on the contrary, antagonist and hostile principles, eternally separate, and opposed to each other as essentially as good and evil. The history of Christian ages is there-

fore a history of the contest of these two rivals, who each endeavour to win the affections of the human race ; and during the period to which our investigations are chiefly directed we shall find it steadily pursued, and presenting all the results which would necessarily arise from such a struggle, where those on both sides possessed a perfect self-consciousness and a clear knowledge of their relative position.

During the middle ages, the men who waged war against the church, either with violent arms or with the subtilty of a false wisdom, were all addicted to superstition in some form or other. Fitz Eustace need not have wondered as he did at the conduct of his Lord Marmion, on the night when they lodged in the hostel :—

“ Wonder it seem’d, in the squire’s eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise—
Of whom ’twas said he scarce receiv’d
For gospel what the church believ’d—
Should, stirr’d by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Array’d in plate and mail.”

Julian believed, with Herod, in the transmigration of souls, and that he had been Alexander the emperor. Frederick II., who disdained the wisdom of the church, had always some Arabian astrologers at his side, without whose advice he undertook nothing. Wallenstein, who disdained the exercises of piety, had recourse to the stars to learn what would be the success of his projects. Ecce-lino, who was a heretic as well as a persecutor of monks, and as such condemned by the church, had astrologers always with him, calculating and divining, by whose advice he used to give battle : he had Master Salio, a canon of Padua, Riprandino of Verona, Guido of Bonato, and Paul the Saracen, with a long beard, who came from Baldach and the remote regions of the east *. When enveloped at the bridge of Cassiano, over the Adda, by a superior force, he shuddered ; for his astrologers had told him that this place would be fatal to him. The last ruler who laid violent hands on the vicar of Christ

* Monach. Paduani Chronic. lib. ii.

believed in the occult powers of fate, and was known to have consulted Moreau the Chiromancian. In short, wherever the light of faith was withdrawn, an abundant growth of such errors followed. Melancthon seems to have reserved all his fixedness of belief for Pagan superstition; so that an extraordinary overflow of the Tiber, and a mule being delivered of a foal with an ill-shapen foot, appeared to him as signs that something serious was at hand; while the birth of a calf with two heads was an omen, he thought, of the approaching destruction of Rome by schism. The superstition of Luther was of the grossest kind: he says himself that he saw at Dessau a child who was born of the devil, and that he told the princes of Anhalt, with whom he was, that if he had command there he would have the child thrown into the Moldau, at the risk of being its murderer; but that the princes were not of his opinion. While marrying, at Torgau, the Duke Philip of Pomerania with the Elector's sister, in the midst of the ceremony the nuptial ring fell to the ground; and he says that he had a sensation of terror, but that he said, "Hear, devil, this does not concern you *!"

Striking indeed was the contrast between the English tribunals after the new opinions had been established by law, when women were weighed against church Bibles, to ascertain whether they should be burnt as witches, and the conduct of Catholic pontiffs, like Innocent III., who, when Philip of France alleged magical influence to excuse his remaining separate from his wife, replied to him in these terms:—"O dear son, if you would have us believe that magicians are in fault, you must first have recourse to prayer, alms, and the holy sacrifice, taking to you your spouse in faith and the fear of God; and then we shall see whether magicians can prevail †."

While Italy beheld her philosophers coming to the aid of priests in denouncing superstition, England heard her immortal Bacon affirming that truth might be found in a well-regulated astrology. Indeed, wherever the new religious opinions had superseded divine faith, every horrible thing which the Catholic church had been for ages engaged in combating seemed to gain fresh vigour. De

* Michelet, *Mém. de Luther*, iii. 178.

† Hurter, *Geschichte Inn.* III. 120.

Foe's account of the superstitions of the citizens of London during the plague in 1665, will furnish evidence enough: he confesses that he was himself inclined to regard the comet as the warning of God's judgments. "The people were more addicted to prophecies and astrological conjurations, dreams, and old wives' tales, than ever they were, before or since. Books frightened them terribly, such as Lilly's Almanack, Gadbury's Astrological Predictions, and the like. Next to these were the dreams of old women, or the interpretation of old women upon other people's dreams; and these put abundance of people even out of their wits." These unhappy men, who would not recognize God in the mystery of love present upon the altar, saw apparitions in the air—saw flaming swords coming out of a cloud—saw hearses and coffins in the sky, and heaps of dead bodies—saw ghosts upon the gravestones. "Now was the city filled with fortune-tellers, cunning men, and astrologers, and a wicked generation of pretenders to magic; and this trade grew so open, that it was common to have signs and inscriptions over doors—'Here lives a fortune-teller,' or 'astrologer'—'Here you may have your nativity calculated;' and the usual signs were Bacon's Brazen Head, or Mother Shipton, or Merlin's Head. Many were thrown into the dead cart with hellish charms hanging about their necks, such as the word *Abracadabra* formed in triangle or inverted pyramid."

The late author of *Letters on Demonology* thinks that Chaucer could not be serious in averring that the fairy superstitions were obsolete in his day, since they were found current three centuries afterwards. Had he reflected upon the councils, the bulls of sovereign pontiffs, the exertions of the monks and friars, to whom Chaucer expressly ascribes the expulsion, at an early period, from the land of all such spirits, he would never have used such an argument. The superstitions and Pagan rites which still linger on the banks of the Tamar and the Tavy, as well as in other parts of England, are rather a second harvest than the original crop untouched. A tribe of fortune-tellers is generally found among the ruins of Netley Abbey: are we to conclude, with this author, that the monks could not have suppressed that evil, because we find it there at the present day? The fact is, that superstition is a weed of quick growth, which is no sooner

neglected than it sends up vigorous shoots. "Life is so tender and mysterious, so pliant and volatile, that there is no seed it will not readily receive; evil sprouts up and runs wild in it, and brings up the intoxicating grape from the nether world, and the wine of horror;" so that when the light of faith has failed, and the organization of the church become powerless, after three centuries it is not surprising that there should be an abundant harvest of all that the fiend most loves. Not only do the germs of every hideous thing still exist, but the same forms even return; for anyone might suppose that Jamblichus was describing the maxims of our peasants, instead of those of the Pythagoreans, when he speaks of their rule always to put on the right shoe first, and to wash the left foot first; and describes their reverence for certain birds, and their attempt to cure diseases by incantations*.

Strange it is that man, who was designed to be the master and ruler of all the creatures of the earth, should have so lost his high privilege, and sunk down to nature, becoming, instead of its master, its slave; but, as Frederick Schlegel observes, "This is the beginning of the history of the human race†."

Many works have been written on the downfall and extinction of Paganism, but there remains still a vast field for future philosophers to explore, before one can feel fully satisfied. The different form which evil may assume has often deceived observers. Under its ancient colours it maintained the contest much longer than is generally supposed; and hence we are presented with a series of passages very important to an historian of the middle ages, which attest the efforts of the Catholic church to root out the Pagan superstitions, of which many traces still remained. The superstitious regard to days and practices inculcated by Hesiod‡ was denounced as inconsistent with the Christian profession. "Who would believe," exclaims St. Augustin, "that it was a great sin to pay attention to months, and years, and seasons, as those do who wish or fear to begin certain things on certain months, because through a vain superstition they believe that there are happy and unhappy

* De Pyth. vit. 29. † Philosophie der Geschichte, i. 38.

‡ Op. et Dies.

days, unless we were to estimate its enormity by the fear which the apostle expressed, which made him say, “*Dies observatis, et menses et tempora et annos. Timeo vos, ne forte sine causa laboraverim in vobis* *.” Hugo of St. Victor makes a similar remark, and cites the words of St. Augustin †. And John of Salisbury argues, from the same text, the peril of superstition ‡. In the canonical letters of St. Basil it is ordained, that he who should apply to fortune-tellers or others, to learn their art, should perform a penance equal to that imposed for homicide.

In the seventh century St. Ouen complained that Pagan traces could be still met with among the people of Rouen, on his arrival to take possession of that see. “I warn you,” said the venerable man, “and I conjure you not to observe the customs of Pagans; not to believe in magicians, or fortune-tellers, or sorcerers, or enchanters; not to consult them for your diseases, or for any cause. Do not observe omens, or sneezing, or the cry of birds. Let no Christian pay regard to the day that he leaves his house, or to the day that he returns to it, for God has made them all. Let no one pay any attention to days or to moons in beginning any work. Let no one follow the impious and superstitious practices of the first of January; let no one invoke the name of demons, Neptune, Pluto, Diana, Minerva, or Geniuses; let no one go to any temple, or stone, or fountain, or tree, or open place, to burn tapers or accomplish a vow; let no one fasten ligatures to the neck of any man or beast; let no one make any lustration, or practise any enchantments on herbs, or pass any animal through a hollow tree or through an excavation in the earth; let no woman suspend amber to her neck; let there be no cries at the eclipses of the moon; and, above all, let no one ever utter an impure or luxurious word. Prohibit these diabolical games, these songs of the Gentiles; destroy these fountains, cut down these trees, burn these figures §.” A capitulary of Charlemagne required the curates to oppose the worship at fountains and consecrated stones, which was still lingering from the time of the Druids. In the penitential

* *Enchirid. cap. xxi.*

† *Sermo liii.*

‡ *De Nugis Curialium, lib. i. c. 12.*

§ *Vita S. Eligii, lib. ii. c. 15.*

canons of Rhaban Maur there are minute inquiries whether any one had offered sacrifices to the deities of old, or had made oblations to them near consecrated trees, fountains, and rocks *.

The tradition of the open war against Paganism is still fresh in some places. The hymn sung in the church of Rouen on the festival of St. Mellon makes mention of the idol Roth, which had been destroyed by that saint in the neighbouring village, which is still called Mont Roth †. The councils had been obliged from time to time to raise their voice and exert their authority in this cause. That of Auxerre, in the year 578, prohibited many Pagan superstitions, as did another in 590; and that of Lißines in 742, under St. Boniface and the protection of Caroloman, by which last it was decreed that a person who should be guilty of practising any Pagan observance was to be condemned in the fine of fifteen solidi.

“ We have desired, according to the canons,” say these Fathers, “ that every bishop in his parish should be solicitous, with the aid of him who is the defender of his church, that the people of God should refrain from every thing Pagan, and should cast away all the abominations of the Gentiles ‡.”

By the canons of the council of Orange, in 452, a bishop who should neglect to abolish the custom of adoring fountains, trees, and stones, is declared guilty of sacrilege. Pope Gregory, addressing all the people of the old Saxons, declaring himself a debtor to the wise and to the unwise, charges them to fly from all heathen observances, and from putting any trust in metals or in idols §. St. Martin would not even spare the great pine tree which the Pagans had dedicated, and he caused it to be destroyed along with their temple.

With what care the Benedictine monks extirpated the idolatrous superstitions which prevailed in the Black Forest when they first colonized that region, may be seen in all histories of their order ||. The crusaders, on

* Ap. Hartzheim Concil. Ger. ii.

† Taillepié, *Récueil des Antiquitez et Singularitez de Rouen*, 16.

‡ Can. V. § S. Bonifac. Epist. cxxi.

|| Gerberti *Historia Nigræ Silvæ*, tom. i. passim.

taking Constantinople in 1204, found vestiges there of Pagan superstitions and magical contrivance of old prepared. Here was a famed statue, formed with secret magic art by Apollonius of Tyana, as a safeguard of the city; for Constantine had transferred to it, among other Pagan monuments, the palladium of old Rome, by which it would seem he had hoped to have imparted to it the fortune of the ancient city. These curious relics of Pagan art were then destroyed, with many others *.

At the same time the zeal of men, in ages of faith, against Paganism, was not a blind fanaticism; for it was compatible with their preserving whatever, in the ancient civilization, was capable of being purified or reconciled with Christian manners. Ambrose Leo, on occasion of mentioning a certain game celebrated at Nola, which he traces from their heathen ancestors, says, "Their Christian posterity, which always seems to have desired, by correcting, to preserve ancient things, and to transfer all things as far as possible to a good and holy use, was not disturbed by such spectacles, but rather left it for the service of religion, and as an innocent recreation for the people †." That such customs as the gathering of misletoe boughs at Christmas, in England and France, had descended from the Druids, was not deemed a sufficient reason for denouncing them as impure.

By the theological faculty of the university of Paris, in 1398, a thing was declared superstitious when the effects expected from it could not be reasonably ascribed either to God or to nature, which is his work ‡. A few passages from the writers of the middle age will show, as Marchangy observes, with what incessant solicitude, and yet with what a gentle hand and admirable prudence, religion sought to extirpate error, to banish ignorance, and to spread the light of truth. Let us hear John of Salisbury:—"Tiberius Cæsar," saith he, "having a dread of thunder, used always to surround his head with laurel when a storm came on, for that leaf was thought to repel lightning. But what makes a man more secure is, if he preserves the faith of the cross in his breast, and

* Hurter, *Geschichte Inn.* III. i. 635.

† Amb. Leo de Nola, lib. iii. 12. ap. *Antiq. Ital. Thesaur.* tom. ix.

‡ Art. 3. de la Censure.

bears the justice of faith upon his head, and makes with an innocent hand the sign of the cross upon his forehead, having Him always before his mind who secures His worshippers from all fear of the world, saying to them, ‘*A signis cœli ne timueritis quæ timent gentes, quia ego vobiscum Dominus Deus vester* *.’” So, when a comet appeared and terrified the court of Louis le Debonnaire, as it was generally said to portend the change of kingdoms and the death of kings, his astronomer, who lived always in his palace, cited these words of the prophet to him; upon which the emperor replied, “True, we ought to fear no other star but Him, who is the Creator of this star as of ourselves †.”

“Some affirm,” says John of Salisbury, “that it is unlucky to meet a priest or other religious man; I also believe it to be pernicious to go against not only priests, but any wise men ‡.” “Whoever follows the vanity of dreams is little vigilant in the law of the Lord, and sleeps a pernicious sleep. Whoever exercises his credulity upon the prestiges of dreams, departs as much from the sincerity of faith as from the line of reason §.”

Pope Innocent III. mentions, as one of the heavy charges against the King of Portugal, his custom of regarding it as a dire omen if he should meet a monk or a priest coming towards him, and his keeping a pytho-ness or witch, to the peril of his soul, consulting her daily, and refusing to dismiss her at the call of the bishop ||. We may remark, that Cervantes makes the squire condemn the observance of omens on the authority of the village curate.

In the middle ages it was clearly recognized, that attention to omens was identical with the spirit of Paganism. “The departure of King Don Sebastian with his fleet for Africa,” says an old writer, “was as sad as if the issue had been foreseen by every one: for in such a crowd of men, of various conditions, embarking, no one was seen to smile as is common at the beginning of expeditions, but as if the sad end were visible to all, every one complained that he was led unwilling. The king,

* *De Nugis Curialium*, lib. i. c. 13.

† *Vita et Actus Lud. Pii ap. Duchesne*, tom. ii.

‡ I. 13.

§ *Id. lib. ii. c. 17.*

|| *Epist. lib. xiv. 8.*

after going on board, remained eight days in the port without leaving the vessel: during all that time, such was the mournful silence throughout the whole fleet, that there was not once heard the sound of a pipe or flute. At the first moment of starting also, accidents occurred; so that if one had had faith like the ancients in auguries, there was enough to discourage the boldest *."

Nor was the zeal of the ecclesiastics confined to the abolition of superstition, which wore the ancient form of the Pagans. They pursued it with the same steadiness, under whatever colours it might assume, according to the progress of society and the social condition of mankind. By the canons of the council of Arles, in 475, clerks were forbidden, on pain of excommunication, to use any kind of divination, by drawing the lots of the saints and the holy Scripture. All divination was forbidden as a grievous crime, compounded of idolatry, heresy, incredulity, and ambition †. In the fourth book of the ordinances of Louis le Debonnaire, were prohibited the Virgilian lots;—"ut nullus in Psalterio vel Evangelio vel aliis rebus sortiri præsumat nec divinationes aliquas observare." Under the head of divination, in the *Speculum Morale* ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, is condemned all invocation of demons, all predictions by stones, or iron, or water, or fire, or air, or the stars; all regard to birds, the lines of men's hands, dreams, the letters or page first seen of a book, dice, the figures formed by melted lead in water:—"the folly of which," says the author, "is manifest; since no body, earthly or celestial, can make any impression upon the understanding or the will, and in these things one can only look for the causes of natural events." All castings of lots, and ecclesiastical election by lot, are forbidden; for if we read that St. Matthias was chosen by lot before Pentecost, as Bede remarks, it was because the plenitude of the Holy Ghost had not then been shed upon the church, for the seven deacons afterwards were not drawn by lot but elected. Though, if there be necessity, it is lawful with due reverence to implore the divine judgment by lot ‡.

* Hieron. *Conestaggii de Portug. et Castel. conjunct. lib. ii.*

† Joan. Devoti. *Instit. Canon. lib. iv. tit. 13.*

‡ Vinc. Bellov. *Spec. Mor. lib. iii. p. 111. dist. 27.*

Astrology was comprised in the anathema which the church pronounced against all erroneous, conjectural, and vain sciences: its observations combined with magic were in great vogue, as may be witnessed in the books of Agrippa *. James of Toledo sent circular letters through the world, predicting, from astrological calculations, that in the year 1186 a mighty wind would arise from the west which would overthrow all things, so that men would have to take shelter in caverns; and it is mentioned that he alarmed many. One may remark that these superstitions were clearly distinguished and resisted, even where there was a total ignorance of physical science. Isidore, who says that the sun, on dipping into the sea, goes by unknown ways under the earth till it reaches the east, evinces a sound and penetrating judgment in exposing the superstition of astrology; "the observations of which," he says, "are contrary to our faith, and ought to be so unknown to Christians that they should seem to have been never written down †." Hildebert of Mans wrote a poem in fifteen cantos against astrology, and the Angel of the School combats the same error in a tract, "*De Judiciis Astrorum*," in which he shows that it is a grievous sin to follow the judgment of the stars in things which depend upon the will of man ‡. John of Salisbury remarks, that the mathematicians or astrologers err more dangerously even than the interpreters of dreams, since they seem to found their error on the solidity of nature and strength of reason: so they begin from truth, that they may precipitate their followers and themselves into the abyss of falsehood. "Astronomy," he continues, "is a noble and glorious science, if it restrain the student within the bounds of moderation; but if he pass beyond, through vanity, he becomes a disciple not so much of philosophy as of impiety." He then commences an elaborate demonstration of the error and danger of the astrologers, refuting them from the doctrine of providence, and of the freedom of the human will §.

The *ars notoria* is pronounced unlawful in the *Speculum Morale*, ascribed to Vincent, on the ground that, to acquire knowledge it makes use of things which have

* Lib. ii. c. 52.

† Isid. Etymolog. lib. iii.

‡ Opusc. xxvi.

§ *De Nugis Curialium*, lib. ii. c. 13-26.

not of themselves the virtue of causing knowledge, such as the inspection of certain figures, or the uttering of unknown words; and therefore this is an art of signs, but not of signs divinely instituted, as are the sacramental signs; therefore these are empty signs, and consequently pertaining to certain compacts with demons; and therefore the art is to be wholly condemned and fled from by a Christian *.

Judicial astrologers were condemned, not only by the ecclesiastical, but also by the civil laws. St. Augustin mentions the expulsion of an astrologer from the church †, as does also St. Epiphanius. Magicians and malignant contrivers of diabolic art were excommunicated, and were to be punished with death, according to the laws of Constantine, without hope of pardon at Easter ‡.

The terror which these inspired in the ancient world, and the enormous crimes associated with such professions, will explain this severity; yet it is certain that during the middle ages the infliction of capital punishment for such offences was rare. We find the ecclesiastical arm frequently stretched out to save suspected persons from the ferocity of the populace, and even from the cruelty of the civil tribunals. St. Agobart, bishop of Lyons in 833, besides writing a treatise against the popular opinion that storms were raised by certain enchanters, styled in the Capitularies of Charlemagne "*Tempestarii sive immissores tempestatum*," exerted himself to deliver three men and a woman from the mob, who were dragging them to put them to death for it; and not without great difficulty did he succeed. In the "*Speculum Morale*," ascribed to Vincent de Beauvais, there is an anecdote related of a priest who, being told by a certain old woman, who pretended to be a witch, that she and her companions had often entered his house at midnight in spite of all locks and bolts, led her into a chamber, and having locked the door, inflicted a severe chastisement, desiring her, at the same time, to exercise her sortilegous power, if she really possessed it, and escape §.

The punishment of such persons was very different

* Spec. Mor. iii. lib. iii. 27.

† Tract. in Ps. 61.

‡ Joan. Devot. lib. iv. tit. 14. § Spec. Mor. lib. iii. p. 111. 27.

after the establishment of the new religious opinions. It was not till 1562, under Elizabeth, that a formal statute against sorcery, as penal in itself, was passed in England. "The Church of Rome," says the author of *Letters on Demonology*, "was unwilling, in her period of undisputed power, to call in the secular arm to punish persons for witchcraft; a crime which could, according to her belief, be subdued by the spiritual arm alone: but wherever the Calvinist interest became predominant, a general persecution of sorcerers seemed a necessary consequence." He then relates the atrocious cruelties practised in Sweden, in the years 1669 and 1670; and in England, with sanction of the parliament, by Calamy, Baxter, and Hopkins—such men as Sir Matthew Hale and Sir Thomas Brown acquiescing; and he adds, "even the Indians were struck with wonder at the proceedings of the English against witches in New England, and drew disadvantageous comparisons between them and the French, among whom, they said, 'the Great Spirit sends no witches.'" Through the whole of the sixteenth, and the greater part of the seventeenth century, little abatement of such persecution can be traced in the kingdom.

But let us return to ages of faith. In the *Speculum Morale*, ascribed to Vincent, under the head of superstitious observances, we find condemned all attempts to discover truth by unknown letters or figures, or the notary art, the use of ligatures and medicaments depending upon charmed words or prayers without regard to their natural properties, the attempt to make use of diabolical agency, or to impart the power of it to others, all the thousand observances of natural events as predicting the future without regard to their natural effects, the suspending of sacred words to the neck, with the idea of there being a force in the words themselves to help them; for if the evangelic words profit them not when heard in their ears, how can they save them when hung from their neck. So that all is superstition in observances, which does not belong to the divine reverence: as if in hanging a reliquary, faith should be placed, not in God and in his saints, but in the form of the stone, as for example in its being triangular*.

* Dist. 28. lib. iii. p. 111.

Amulets and written charms, the use of which prevails at the present day to such an extent in the East *, had been condemned, under pain of excommunication, by the council of Laodicea in the fourth century, and the censure of charms to ward off diseases was repeated by the council of Rome under Gregory II. in 712, by that of Milan in 1565, and by that of Tours in 1583. St. Charles, during the plague, according to the practice of the church in all previous times of calamity, prohibited with especial energy all inventions of superstition. Thus Pope Innocent the First would not suffer Honorius to employ the Tuscan astrologers and mathematicians in defending Rome against Alaric by their enchantments, but prevailed upon him to publish a severe law against them. The capitulary of Herard, bishop of Tours, in 858, imposed public penance on all persons who practised divination and sorcery. The ancient Roman Penitential prescribed a penance of seven years to all who applied to such arts. The Penitential of Theodore reduced the term to one year, or to a fast of three Lents. Bede, in his Collection of Canons †, and Pope Gregory III., prescribe a penance of from six months to three years to all who have had recourse to divinations, according to the extent of their fault. By the laws of the Visigoths in Spain, those who had recourse to sortileges or magic could not be received as witnesses ‡. Among the statutes of St. Boniface we read, the priest who practised any magical arts, or who interpreted dreams, is to be punished with the utmost severity of the canons §: and in the ecclesiastical laws, collected by the Abbot Regino in the ninth century, we find that the bishop was to enquire whether any one dealt in magic, and whether there were any women who, by drugs or incantations, pretended to raise love or hatred ||. In the Collection of Canons published by D'Aichery, which date probably from the ninth century, we read, that he who practised magical arts, was to be deposed and confined during life in a monastery ¶.

The horror which such practices inspired is well expressed in a poem taken from a life of St. Basil, ascribed

* Lanc's Mod. Egyptians, l.

† C. xi.

‡ Lib. ii. tit. iv. l.

§ Dacher. Spicil. ix.

|| Ap. Hartzheim Concilia Germ. ii.

¶ Cap. 59. ex Concilio Toletano, iv. 29.

to his contemporary St. Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, of which a Latin version is given by Rosweyde in his lives of the Fathers, describing the terror of the youth who is about to consult a wizard. The poet concludes with this terrible intimation;—

“ And he could then almost have given
His fatal purpose o’er;
But his good Angel had left him
When he entered the sorcerer’s door.”

Burchard, bishop of Worms, at the beginning of the eleventh century, published many decrees prohibiting all kinds of superstition; and at the end of the twelfth century, many councils imposed severe penances on those who had recourse to superstitious practices, though under the form of medicinal *. This included the superstitious wearing of precious stones to ward off diseases, which may be traced to Aristotle in his book on stones, and to which a no less illustrious philosopher than Sir Isaac Newton seems to have attached credit. Burton gravely treats upon the virtue of certain stones worn on the person, to produce moral effects, and after speaking of amulets and plants gathered on Friday, concludes with Renodius, “I say they are not altogether to be rejected †.” If, however, we find that, following Pliny, it was supposed by Albert the Great, and Guevara, the confessor of Charles V., that certain stones really possessed medicinal properties, we must not conclude that against such an opinion the censures of the church were applicable: “It is proved,” says the Moral Mirror, “that bodies have certain occult properties, as the load-stone, and therefore it is not superstition to try them in various combinations, provided no characters be added, which cannot give force to nature ‡.”

Totally unconnected with scientific speculations, was the error against which such dreadful penalties were appointed by many councils, in reference to those who wore amulets and phylacteries.

In the books of occult philosophy by Cornelius Agrippa, we can see how many forms of writing holy words, in Latin or Hebrew, were used superstitiously as charms.

* Le Brun. Hist. des Pratiques Superstitieuses, tom. i. 383.

† II. 5. ‡ Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Morale, III. lib. iii. 28.

The Rabbinical writers had innumerable secrets of this kind ; and Agrippa shows how there are to be written on parchment, in gold letters, words out of the Bible *. A distinction, however, was to be made even here, for as the continuator of Vincent of Beauvais's work observes, " If relics or sacred readings are carried round the neck through reverence for God and the saints, they are lawful ; but if any thing vain be added, as for instance, that it must be in a triangular vessel or such like, which in no way pertains to the reverence of God, they become superstitious †." In like manner John of Salisbury, while exposing the folly and turpitude of superstition, takes care to show that pious practices of devotion, analogous to the touching of our Lord's garments, such as repeating the Lord's prayer in administering medicine to the sick, or making the sign of the cross over the drink, or reading a chapter of the Gospels, or any thing done from true faith and referred to the glory of the omnipotent God, may be retained, not only without sin, but, as is proved, he says, by experience, with utility ; while all practices, not included under this head, are not so much to be despised as to be fled from ‡. One need only look into the collection of Ives de Chartres to see what was the zeal of the church, in the middle ages, against superstitions of every kind §

Descending to later times, we find the council of Narbonne in 1555 proclaiming that bishops ought to oppose superstition with as much force as they resist heresy, and that it is one of their principal duties to prevent sortileges, divinations, and enchantments, from being disseminated in their dioceses. The first council of Milan in 1565 enters with great detail upon the subject, and imposes severe penance upon such as wore or sold charmed rings, or professed to foretell actions, depending on the free will of men, or who in beginning a journey, or setting about any enterprise, should observe days, or the cry or flight of birds. Finally, we may remark, that against all arts of this kind the Roman pontiffs have enacted laws, as in the decretals of Gregory IX., Leo X., Sixtus V., Gregory XV., Urban VIII., and Benedict

* Lib. iii. † Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Mor. lib. iii. c. 28.

‡ De Nugis Curialium lib. ii. c. 1. 17.

§ Ivon. Casnot. Decret. Pars. xi.

XIV. Modern writers, I am aware, have been pleased to condemn and ridicule these sentences, though the bull of the latter pontiff against sorcery, even stript of its authoritative character, as emanating from a head so little credulous, ought to be sufficient to make the prudent pause. The fact, however, that men opposed to the Catholic church on professedly religious and philosophical grounds should be found taking part against her in this contest, and evincing a sympathy with her antagonists, even of this order, is assuredly remarkable. Her zeal against paganism they stigmatize as a barbarous fanaticism—her endeavour by spiritual and intellectual means to check superstition under other forms, as being itself unnecessary and eminently superstitious, implying a belief in things which do not exist. Gibbon, and the writers who follow in his steps, seem full of indignation, and full of compassion, whenever reminded of the contest of the Church with Paganism. In allusion to this, Heeren laments, if not loudly yet deeply, what he terms the fanaticism of the Christians, in the time of Constantine, and he seems to have no terms strong enough to express his feeling on the conduct of the bishops and monks of Gall in the fifth century. Poor St. Martin, for what he thought a holy work, incurs from this learned man the charge of having displayed the fanatical rage of a monk, united with the destructive spirit of a soldier. Every idyl which falls draws forth fresh exclamations from him against the herd of monks, who spread such ruin over the land *.

An historian of the ages of faith can hardly be expected to enter formally upon the justification of the Catholic society, on the ground of its hostility to the idolatrous superstition of Pagan times. Happily, too, the influence of writers, of the class to which I allude, seems in general on the decline. To know somewhat of the history relative to these decrees of the Church, must be at all times useful; it is well to cast a look back at the gloomy depths from which the human race has been drawn, at the dense clouds of horrid darkness, which have passed from this region of the earth. "We are so accustomed," says Frederick Schlegel, "to view the

* Heeren, *Geschichte der Classischen Litteratur im Mittelalter*, i. t. 49.

fabulous world and the gods of Greece, only on the poetic side, as a mere beautiful poem, that we are quite surprised and mortified when we stumble unexpectedly upon some fact of history, which reveals the peculiar spirit, and the real foundation of the whole of heathenism; such, for example, as that Themistocles himself, the deliverer of Greece, had offered a human sacrifice of three young men*.” The opinion of these writers respecting the inutility, and even superstition of the ecclesiastical censures against those who practised magical arts, has, at first, greater appearance of plausibility, and will require a more formal refutation. And now I might say with Cardan, “our bark that has just escaped the vast sea, tempest tost, of human wisdom, enters upon the deep gulf of darkness, where are nothing but thefts, fires, witchcraft, murders, false images, execrable sacrifices, delusions, shadows, and vanities; and, as in dreams, with a disturbed mind, we seem to behold black clouds and terrific spectres, suns shining at midnight, and bleeding moons, and horrific monsters, so doth this everlasting cave of all evils, this vortex of wickedness, now offer itself to perplex and to dismay†.”

Who so little conversant with the history of ages past as not to have heard of the belief of the human race in the possibility of the rational creature having a supernatural intercourse with the invisible powers of evil, which exist in the universe! When we open the ancient books, we meet with many intimations of this conviction—with many reputed facts related in support of it, and what is also certain, there is corresponding to such notes a secret chord within our breasts, which cannot without considerable difficulty be silenced or unstrung! Alas! how different is the procession that might now be seen, by only stepping aside a little space from that which we have lately witnessed, while contemplating the blessed clean of heart, who beheld God! Nor can we avoid wholly omitting to observe this other procession, by denying, *in limine*, the truth of the human traditions; for it is an historical fact, that while there has been a successive series of pure and just men, beatified even on earth by the vision of their Creator, so has there also

* Philosophie der Geschichte, i. 223.

† Cardani de Sapiencia, lib. iv.

been a successive series of persons deep in guilt and shame, cultivating sympathy with night and darkness, devoted to a demoniac mysticism, who sought to behold his enemy, who believed that they had attained in nocturnal visions that horrible point of evil, and who were deemed by their contemporaries to have had their wills in that respect gratified *. What kind of personages then are these? No one can be at a loss to answer this question, who is at the pains to open history, or to consult the popular traditions of any country. It is immaterial what choice we make of instances; let us take the first which accident recalls. Here then is one of whom our old Norman writers write darkly; it is the mother of Ranulfe Flambart, an unworthy bishop of Durham in the reign of William Rufus, of a plebeian race, who was, they all declare, a sorceress, and had converse with the demon, in whose intimacy she had lost an eye, and on her son's fall she passed the seas into Normandy with her treasure, exposed to the derisions of her fellow travellers, on account of her criminal enchantments; so speaks Orderic Vitalis †. She who follows is the sister of Balak, a distinguished warrior against the Christians in Palestine, who was a very skilful sorceress, and who predicted the future, and observed the stars ‡.

“All day the wizard lady sat aloof, spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity.” This applies also to the next in view—Madame Tiphaine Raguene, daughter of the Viscount de la Belliere, and wife of Bertrand du Guesclin; she retired to the abbey of Mount St. Michael, when her husband went to the war in Spain, and he caused a handsome lodge to be built for her at the top of the rock. One of the motives of this truly extraordinary woman, in choosing this residence, was her love for the sciences, and especially for judicial astrology. Dom Huynes says of her, “this lady, well educated in philosophy and judicial astronomy, exercised herself continually on this rock, in contemplation of the stars, and in calculations and making experiments. It seems she even remained on Mount St. Michael till a very advanced age, and that she rarely left it. In 1374 she was still there, at the end of which year she died in one of her castles in Brittany.

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 20.

† Lib. x.

‡ Id. lib. xi.

Some of her manuscripts still exist, and Raoul, in his history of Mount St. Michael, says, "that he remembers when he was a child, hearing mention of a little book on vellum, of one hundred pages, with cabalistic figures, and coloured vignettes, which was carefully preserved by the curate of Pludihen *." But there are darker figures of this class, for Spenser does but copy from historic records,

There in a gloomy hollow glen, she found
 A little cottage, built of stickes and reedes,
 In homely wise, and wal'd with sods around;
 In which a witch did dwell in loathly weedes,
 And wilfull want, all careless of her needes ;
 So choosing solitarie to abide
 Far from all neighbours, that her divelish deedes
 And hellish arts from people she might hide,
 And hurt far off unknowne whomever she envide †.

Characters of this kind are not confined to our annals, as every classic scholar knows. Socrates himself did not disdain to consult one of them: such was that divining stranger who gave to him, he says, "the best account of the origin of love ;" so that when called upon at Agatho's banquet, to give his opinion respecting it, he only cited what he had heard once from this witch, or, as he calls her, this divining woman, who was wise, and knew many other things, for she foretold the plague of Athens ten years before it occurred; he contented himself with repeating her conversation with him. "What discourse she held with me, he says to the company, I will endeavour to relate to you ‡."

We have seen but women; no less formidable are the representations of the wizard. There were feudal barons, there were men even of sainted habit, who might have heard addressed to themselves such words as those of the abbot of St. Maurice to Manfred,

"——— I know that with mankind,
 Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
 Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
 Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy."

These were the men, dwelling in embattled towers perched on precipitous crags, or within the cloistered

* Hist. de Mt. S. Mic. 226. † Book iii. 7. ‡ Plato, Conviv. 22.

enclosures of the pure and innocent, who might have said with a poet of congenial mind,

“ ——— And then I dived
 In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
 Searching its cause in its effect, and drew
 From withered bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
 Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
 The nights of years in sciences untaught,
 Save in the old time :
 Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
 He, who from out their fountain dwellings raised
 Eros and Anteros, at Gadara.

If we will hear the ancient chronicles, many were the men, who thus with earnest thought heaped knowledge from forbidden mines of lore, who frequented no other schools besides the caves of Toledo and Salamanca, no other books besides the Clavicules and the Grimoires, no other masters but the demons.

In vain, to sooth his wayward fate,
 The cloister oped her pitying gate ;
 In vain, the learning of the age
 Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page ;
 Even in its treasures he could find
 Food for the fever of his mind.
 Eager he read whatever tells
 Of magic, cabala, and spells,
 And every dark pursuit allied
 To curious and presumptuous pride.

Such men, though not openly denounced, were regarded with as much terror as if it had been proved by demonstration ocular, that they were bound in the belt of Peter the First, king of Castille, after it had been charmed by the Jew magician, whom Maria de Pedilla employed*. In effect what passed in their secret studies at the back of the houses, could hardly remain perpetually unknown, and it was certainly enough to awaken fears ; for there, in hours of darkness and tempest, these men were employed with strange instruments of undiscoverable art around them. Clothed in long robes on which cabalistic characters were traced, having generally at their side some hideous creature, with hell's stamp upon

* Roderici Santii Episc. Hist. Hispanicæ, P. iv. c. 14.

him, drest in magical garments, to fetch and set down things at their bidding, while the floor was covered over with circles, and the room hung round with consecrated tapers and human skeletons, they were muttering from some great book, pacing with measured steps to and fro, then lifting up a face of ghastly paleness to look out on the night, then kneeling down and touching the ground with their forehead; then in the onrush of the storm was heard suddenly a medley of voices, as in a quarrel; then, again, as in talk, then as whispering and laughing, while lightning and thunder chased each other; and the house seemed to tremble to its lowest foundations.

The narratives respecting magicians that were current in the middle ages, have all a certain similarity to each other. Let us hear some of them: in the *Magnum Chronicon Belgicum* we read as follows:—"In the city of Utrecht, between Brabant and Cologne, arrived a certain teacher from Toledo, who was a great necromancer, and wholly given to the devil. While sitting at table with the clergy, whom he would, he permitted to eat, and whom he would, he sent to sleep; wherefore eight vain clerks sought to be intimate with him. It is said that he drew a circle with strange characters round the edge, placed these eight clerks within it, laid three seats, which he said were for the three Magi, and on the outside prepared another for Epanamon,—that about midnight he flayed a cat, and cut two pigeons in halves, and invoked three demons to supper,—that they told the clerks they should have their evil will fulfilled—that the Magister then held impious conversation against Christ and Christians, till the rising of the sun, when he let the clerks depart, and commanded them in future to deny the incarnation." A story told me by Godescalk of Wal-munstein, a monk of happy memory, says Cesarius of Heisterbach, should not be omitted. One day he asked a clerk and magician to relate something wonderful respecting his art. The magician replied, I can tell you a fact, which occurred at Toledo, my native city. Many scholars from different countries were there, for the express purpose of studying magic; among them some youths from Bavaria and Suabia, who persuaded their master at length to give them visible proof of his power. He took them at a convenient hour into the open country, and enclosed them within a circle, admonishing them as they

valued their lives not to leave it, to give nothing to the demons, and to receive nothing from them. Soon there appeared all manner of figures, endeavouring to allure them beyond it; one of them accepting a ring, was instantly dragged away, and all vanished. The students threatened their master with death unless he were restored; and he, through fear of death, succeeded by his art in restoring him to his companions; but his face was so emaciated and pale, that he resembled a corpse raised from the tomb. This student soon after retired into a monastery.

Representations of this kind are probably new to no one; but the point for us to determine is, whether these rest upon any substantial ground of truth, or are merely the result of wandering and excited imaginations, though at whatever conclusions we may arrive on this head, the charge against the Church for condemning such superstitions, and against the Catholic society of the ages of faith for regarding them with horror, is equally untenable, since whether we believe or not in the reality of the supernatural intercourse, the crimes which unquestionably resulted from the desire of maintaining it, were not the less numerous and detestable. It may be true that all which John Nider says of magicians, in the fifth and last book of his *Formicarium*, he had learned from a judge of the city of Berne, and from a Benedictine monk, who before his conversion had been a necromancer, a buffoon, a player and jongleur in the court of secular princes, yet Gabriel Naudé cannot on such ground convince us that the guilt of these superstitions has been exaggerated. If men were found by night near gibbets, gathering up the hair, or the nails, or the teeth, or bones of the malefactor, over whose minds and bodies while living the demon had had such power, or groping in graves, or descending into catacombs carrying tapers, altar stones, missals, chalices, and vestments for the holy mass, with some youth at their side, whose wild ravings for the loss of one that had been dearly loved, all his fellow scholars knew; or if in their houses were discovered venomous herbs, unknown ointments, toads, brass and leaden plates with barbarous words or characters engraven on them, one can very easily understand why at least the ecclesiastical authority should have taken

alarm, since its aim was always to prevent crime, and these were no slight indications that minds were capable of intending to commit it to an extent that knew no limits but the human or Satanic power; for, according to the traditions of those who dealt with hell, it was not candles alone moulded beneath the midnight darkness of the new moon, nor the mere uttering magical words and incantations that could give one the mastery over the soul of another; there was much more belonging to such works, as the initiated well knew. Rites and spells, without blood, were incomplete, and conjurations required the very pain of its outgushing screams, and the agonies of death.

In the year 1829, while the sophists of France were clamorous against the holy see for exhorting the clergy to take measures to check sorcery, the journals were publishing accounts of wretches killing boys from having been told by witches that nothing could cure their disease but the fat of Christian innocents. Three years have not elapsed since a man murdered a shepherd, near Insterburgh, in Prussia, who, on being arrested, confessed that he had done so in order to obtain a fat, with which he was told a torch could be made that would render him invisible. That crimes of this nature were always associated with such arts, is a fact that admits of no dispute. The Arians accused St. Athanasius of having killed Arsenius, to make use of his hand for magical purposes; and when the bishop was found to be alive, they ascribed his appearance to the diabolic power of the saint, who, at their suggestion, was banished to Treves.

The work of Gabriel Naudé, entitled “Apology for the Great Personages suspected of Magic,” undoubtedly reflects credit on the ingenuity of the learned collector who formed the Mazarine library; but that he fails in attaining his object is the conclusion at which I think every one who reads it attentively must arrive. “True,” as Roger Bacon observes, “many books were reputed amongst magical, which were not such, but contained the dignity of wisdom *.” Believe, then, if you please, might some have justly said that I can do strange things; I have conversed with a magician, most profound in his

* Lib. de Potestate Artis et Naturæ, cap. 3.

art, and yet not damnable; true, again, the popular suspicions were sometimes directed against men as magicians, who had no fault but in whose fortunes there seemed something singular. Trithemius relates a remarkable instance; St. Simeon, from Syracuse, in Sicily, was a recluse at Treves: like holy Abraham, he had left his country for God, and gone first to Jerusalem and thence to Mount Sinai, where he became a monk in the convent of St. Catherine. Some years after he returned to Jerusalem, where he met Boppo, archbishop of Treves, in 1015, who induced him to accompany him to Treves: the archbishop gave him a lodging in a lofty tower, at the black gate, which, says the abbot, is still called Simeon's tower, and there this wanderer endured many trials; for the people not knowing his sanctity, cried out that he was a magician and necromancer; and whenever the crops failed, or storms devastated the land, or any evil befell the city, they ascribed it to him; and often they came with fagots, and tried to set fire to the tower, and at night demons were often heard crying round the tower, that he was an impious malefactor; but the holy servant of God persevered, and there ended his course in great sanctity, and after his death the abbot Eberwen wrote his history, and near the black gate a church of canons was founded, and the people recognized their error. His Greek psalter, in ancient letters, small but legible and beautiful, we saw, says Trithemius, in the monastery of Thelejeusi*. That such cases did occur might be inferred indeed from the ecclesiastical laws collected by the abbot Rhegino, in the ninth century, which ordered the bishop to inquire on his visitation whether any one charged another with being a sorcerer; for by a capitulary of Charlemagne such a charge insured the death of the traducer†.

No doubt also the object of some authors has been mistaken, as when persons seeing in catalogues that Alexander of Aphrodisiee had written on magical arts, St. Thomas on judicial astrology, and Roger Bacon on necromancy, fancied that they wrote to teach and recommend these things. Further, it is certain that charletans used to pretend that such and such books, compiled by

* Chronic Hirsang.

† Ap. Hartzheim Concil. Ger. ii.

modern hands, had been written by great men. Thus, Chicus says, that he had seen a book of magic, composed by Cham, and another by Solomon ; Trithemius, for example, had to defend himself from the charge of magic, in consequence of a book which was falsely ascribed to him : but when all this is granted, we are yet far from the inference drawn by Naudé, for that Galen, as he says himself, should have been suspected of magic, from having cured a fever by bleeding in two days, that Pope Leo III. to whom was falsely ascribed the book, entitled “*Enchiridion Leonis Papæ contra omnia Mundi Pericula* ;” that Pope Silvester, William of Paris, Robert of Lincoln, Albert the Great, Roger Bacon, and Thomas Bungers, should have been obnoxious to a similar charge ages after their death, and when books were attributed to them which they never wrote, as when the alchemists published works in the name of Albertus Magnus, are facts which can never be admitted as evidence of the least weight to prove the proposition that there has been no such thing in the world as a diabolic tradition and demoniac worship. Notwithstanding the assertions of Naudé, we have only to read the works of Jamblichus on Mysteries, of Porphyry on Sacrifices, of Plotinus on Demonology, and of Proclus on Magic, to be convinced that all the horrors generally implied in the term, “the black art,” were taught by those men. Besides, let it be remarked, that the seven wise men of Greece were never suspected of magic—that Plato was never accused of magic—that the disciples of Pythagoras were never accused of magic, though their master was. Why spare Thales the Milesian, so learned an astronomer, or Hecateus and Aristagoras, the first inventors of geometry, astronomy, and arithmetic—none of whom were accused of magic ? On the other hand, all ancient authors agree that Zoroaster practised magic—that Pythagoras was also a magician appears from what his greatest admirers recount respecting the voice of the rivers which addressed him. The testimony of Jamblichus, Pliny, Origen, Tertullian, St. Justin, St. Cyril, St. Augustin, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Porphyry, must surely outweigh the suggestions of Monsieur Naudé ? What has he advanced to make us reject the ancient concurring testimonies respecting the magical practices of Democritus, Empe-

docles, and Apollonius? James of Autun, a Capuchin friar, in a very learned and curious work *, has examined the different assertions of Naudé, and has undermined his conclusion by showing that the illustrious men, whom he cites, as having been suspected of magic, were not suspected by their contemporaries, and that for believing in the truth of the charge against others, we have even their own admissions.

Chicus, Æsculanus, Scaliger, and even Cardan, all professed to have conversations with their demon; the latter is at least so far guilty, that he boasted of having an hereditary demon from his father, of whom he says, "such was his skill in necromancy, that he surpassed all men of our age." The book which Alchindus wrote, *De Motu Diurno et de Theoria Magicarum Artium*, proves that he knew the practice of that art; the cures by certain enchanted words made by Anselm of Parma, are too well attested to be denied. The *Heptameron*, of the far-famed Peter of Aponno, is the most abominable of all books. This extraordinary man was born at Albano, near Padua, in 1250; he was a physician and astrologer, deeply versed in the learning of Averroes; he wrote *Conciliator Differentiarum Philosophicarum et præcipue Medicorum*—having for his assistant Arnold of Villeneuve, though a man very unlike himself. To learn from this Peter, and to see him, the wild youth flocked to Padua from Spain and England, and the German Empire, and from the far parts of Poland. In the eightieth year of his age he was accused of magical arts, and he died in the year 1305, before his trial was over, but his three books were burned in the public square of Padua: the first is called *Heptameron*, which is now printed at the end of the first volume of the works of Agrippa; the second is called, by Trithemius, *Elucidarium Necromanticum*; and the last is called by the same author, *Liber Experimentorum Mirabilium de Annulis, secundum 28 Mansiones Lunæ*: his skill in astronomy appears from the astronomical figures which he caused to be painted in the great hall of the palace of Padua, and from his translations of the works of Rabi Abraham Abenezra. Baptist the Man-

* *L'Incredulite Sçavante et la Credulite Ignorante au Sujet des Magiciens et des Sorciers, avec la Response à l'Apologie de M. Naudé, Lyon, MDCLXXI.*

tuan calls him “a man of great, but of too audacious learning*.” It is true the inscription on the base of his statue in the palace of Padua affirms, that he was absolved of the charge of heresy; but his own confessions attest his guilt, for he admits that he owed all his success to his having prayed always when the moon was in conjunction with Jupiter, in the head of the dragon. Henry Cornelius Agrippa was also suspected and accused publicly of magic; he complains that some have declaimed against him in the churches before the promiscuous people, accusing him of impiety, while others have whispered in corners to excite prelates and kings against him, in consequence of his books on occult science†. His many journeys were explained by saying, that he could not remain long in any one place, without his magical practices being discovered, and that therefore he moved from place to place. His keeping always five or six dogs in his house, two of which were always in his study, whose names are specified in many of his epistles, and for which epitaphs were written by some of his friends, gave occasion to the saying, that the devil conversed with him in the form of a black dog. Naudé acknowledges, that if the composing books of magic were sufficient proof against any one, all the eloquence of the bar of Paris could not exculpate Agrippa from being a magician. In his books on Occult Philosophy he expressly teaches the invocation of demons, with all the characters and ceremonies of magic. With respect to Raymond Lully, Arnold de Villeneuve, St. Thomas, Albert the Great, and other illustrious men of this class, named by Naudé, it is false that they were accused of magic, for the popular voice, as well as the highest authority of their respective times, always declared them worthy of honour and veneration. Tritheimus shews that Albert the Great, so far from writing any books of necromancy and magic, on the contrary refuted all such superstitions in his *Astronomiæ Speculum*‡. The eloquent complaints, therefore, of a recent author, respecting the intellectual state of society in the middle ages, are proved groundless, by the simple fact, that these men were not suspected of magic by their contemporaries, as he supposes.

* Lib. i. de Patientia, cap. 3.

† Pref. ii. lib.

‡ Chronic. Hirsaug. An. MCCLXXX.

Let us endeavour to trace briefly, with ancient authors, the history of this dark science, and then to explain in what it was thought to consist. According to the early Christian philosophers, the demons were authors of idolatry and magic; and in the second age of the world, the academies of magicians began. St. Clement believes that magic was the capital crime which provoked the wrath of God, and made him drown the world in the deluge. Cham, it is supposed, revived it, and taught it to his son Mesraim, from whom the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians learned it. Traces of its predominance can be witnessed in the march of Xerxes, when the horrid rite was celebrated at the nine ways, for each of which a boy and a maid were buried alive. The race of sorceresses who wandered out of Colchis, and sought by the dark practices of black magic to obtain ends beyond mortality, transmitted the doctrines of demoniac mysticism, while all the arts of natural magic were studied by the priests of idols*.

Some have ascribed a peculiar interest in such arts to particular regions of the earth. St. Epiphanius says, that the Carpocratians were the inventors of philtres to fetter the will of man, and make love and hatred grow up in the heart. But, without attending to such details, it is certain from the Holy Scriptures that the practice of diabolic arts in general began very early. The sorceries of the Egyptian magicians and of the Jews, when St. Paul was at Ephesus, are known to every one. Josephus says that the latter learned the art of casting out devils from Solomon; and it is supposed that the former borrowed from them their forms of adjuration in magic. The sorceries of Simon Magus for a long time convinced the people of Samaria, from the least to the greatest, that he was the great power of God. Being discomfited by St. Philip, he removed to Rome, where, by his witchcrafts in the time of Claudius, he gained such reputation that he had a statue set up to him as a God†. Tertullian reproached the Romans with having placed him among their deities; which testimony is sufficient to disprove the opinion of some modern scholars, who refuse to admit the fact, and substitute the inscription *Seironi*

* Goërres *die Christliche Mystik*, i. 18.

† Just. Mart. *Apolog.* ii.

Deo Sanco for Simoni Deo sancto. St. Isidore says, that the vanity of magical arts taught by Zoroaster and Democritus, from the traditions of evil angels, flourished throughout all the world for many ages *.

To counteract and imitate the divine ordinance of a traditionary instruction to the human race, the ancient writers suppose that the demon provided a tradition of his own, which appeared in the degradation of the Jewish, the Mahometan, and some modern sects; and that, to entice mortals by promising a restoration of the original privileges of nature, he included in it a doctrine of devils, by which men were to be brought into communion with beings of angelic nature. The constant tradition of this diabolic sect is attested by Tertullian, St. Justin, St. Irænaeus, St. Cyprian, St. Clement, St. Chrysostom, and St. Augustin. It can be traced through the middle ages; and its existence at the present day, not only in the East, where it reigns as in the days of Pharaoh †, but also in some of the secret societies spread over Europe, is doubted by no one who has extensive communications; though certain individuals, even belonging to these societies, may not conceive it possible; for all things are not for all; and as, in the rites of Bacchus and Ceres, it was necessary that there should be an ass to assist at them to carry the mysteries,—so here, to answer the purpose of those who are initiated, there must be rich men and noble to play an analogous part.

Pliny says that magic was so much accredited in his time, that almost the whole East was under its domination; he remarks, too, that these Oriental superstitions are found so rooted in Britain, that they might be thought to have been first derived thence. “*Adeo ista toto mundo consensere,*” he concludes, “*quanquam discordi et sibi ignoto ‡.*”

Every one knows how the poets and philosophers were familiar with this diabolic tradition; Horace attesting the enchantments of Canidia, Homer those of Circe, and Ovid those of Medea: in which representations Lactantius observes that they have only worked upon a ground of truth.

Numa Pompilius had reduced the diabolic lore to

* Etymolog. viii. 9. † Lane’s Modern Egyptians, i. 341.

‡ Nat. Hist. c. i.

seven books in Latin and seven in Greek. "Not wishing," says St. Augustin, "that men should learn his nefarious science, and yet fearing to violate what was taught him by demons, he chose to have his books buried with him in his sepulchre, which on being dug up under the consulship of Cornelius and Bevius, and shown to the senate, were immediately burnt by its orders*." That Pythagoras learned divination from the Egyptians, is testified by Porphyry †, who describes his superstition in detail. He used to lie near a river at night, wrapped in the fleece of a black lamb; and he remained for thrice nine days, clothed in black wool, in a cave. Pliny says that Democritus and Empedocles travelled in Egypt to learn magic. "But why has not Aristotle taken notice of the school of magic in Egypt," asks the bishop Mirandulanus, "if it really were such as Picus of Mirandula, Crinitus, and others affirm?" Naudé concludes that it was only a school of natural magic, or mathematics ‡.

But the observation of recent travellers proves the rashness of this learned man in contradicting the concordant voice of antiquity, from a desire to maintain a theory of his own; for Lane, in his account of the modern Egyptians, relates that the more intelligent of the Mooslims distinguish the two kinds of magic—the spiritual, which is believed to effect its wonders by the agency of angels and genii, and by the mysterious virtues of certain names of God; the latter natural and deceptive magic, which affects the vision and imagination by physical operations. "The former," he says, "is universally considered among the Egyptians as true magic, and is divided into two kinds—the divine and the Satanic."

Nor were the ancient governments unaware of this evil. Augustus Cæsar condemned to the flames two thousand volumes of divination. Such were the books that the converts brought to St. Paul, as St. Chrysostom and Venerable Bede remark. The books of magic burnt by the apostle were estimated at a sum equivalent to five thousand gold crowns. The court of Nero was filled with magicians, and he himself one of them. But the

* De Civ. Dei, vii. 34.

† De Vita Pythag.

‡ G. Naudé, *Apologie pour les Grands Person. soupçonnés de Magic*, 2.

respite was of short duration: the laws of Constantine were severe against magical arts. The emperors Honorius and Theodosius passed a decree of banishment against all who did not bring their magical books and burn them in presence of the bishops. Eusebius says, however, that though such books are used, the sorcerers receive personal instruction from the demon. No one is ignorant with what evil arts bad spirits were invoked by the gnostic magicians who practised what was done in the infamous rites of the idol Panor with the Pagans *.

St. Chrysostom relates that one day, walking with a friend near a river, and observing something white floating, they thought it linen, but as it approached they perceived that it was a book. They contrived to pick it out, and on opening it found that it was a book of magic. A soldier perceived them, and passed on to denounce them. "By the mercy of God," he says, "we threw it into a secret place, and so escaped the danger; for if it had been found in our possession, we should have been condemned as magicians †." Soldiers used to be then placed at the gate of the city to examine whether any one carried such books; and on mere suspicion of magic, persons were left in prison: so severe were the emperors against this crime. The Jew Zedechia, who in the time of Charlemagne had himself called *Magister videns*, and many others against whom his code fulminates this sentence, "*Magi in quacunque sint parte terrarum, humani generis inimici credendi sunt*," are instances to show the succession of the same guilty race to the eighth and ninth centuries. A capitulary of Charlemagne is directed against the nocturnal promenades to desert valleys, after the use of magic unctions, called sabbats of sorcerers, or fairy dances. Leo II., bishop of Catana in the eighth century, having been a Benedictine monk at Ravenna, was said to have resisted a magician named Theodore, whom the hymnographer styles "*aspectu formidabilem natione Judæum, et post Simonem Magum nulli in arte magica secundum †.*"

The diabolic series proceeds unbroken, and comes forward prominently associated with Manichæism in France

* Agrip. de Occult. Phil. i. 39. † Homil. 39 in Act. Apost.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, tom. i. 518.

in the eleventh century, when its presence at Orleans was discovered by Arefast, a Norman seigneur, whose clerk Herbert became infected with it while pursuing his studies in that city. On his return to Normandy, this clerk attempted to gain over his master; but the nobleman was filled with horror at the discovery, and gave information to Duke Richard II., by whom it was revealed to King Robert, who sent Arefast to Orleans with a secret charge to discover and punish its followers. This nobleman, passing through Chartres, consulted Evrard, keeper of the archives, the bishop Fulbert being absent, as to the manner he ought to adopt for this purpose, who advised him to go every morning to church, and to receive the communion daily, and then, armed with the sign of the cross, to offer himself boldly as a disciple to the two clerks whom Herbert had specified as his teachers, and to hear what their lessons really were. Arefast obeyed these directions, and, after some probationary delays, was admitted into the secret assemblies of the sect, and told that the Christian religion was a fable, and permitted to witness nocturnal rites of horror associated with the invocation of demons for protection. The king, being apprized, repaired to Orleans; and after vain attempts to make them renounce their errors, several underwent capital punishment. The infection, however, which was widely spread, broke out in many places at the time when the Albigenses disturbed France. The description of their different sects by Peter, monk of Vaulx-Cornay, who was present among them, leaves no doubt of their descent from Manes *, whose doctrine was then propagated in a lower and more popular form by the sorcerers and magicians, the appearance of whom in greatest numbers was coeval with that fearful irruption of Huns, those half-sorcerers, hideous and ferocious warriors, represented by Jornandus as sprung from evil spirits in the desolate plains of the north. Olaus Magnus says that magical arts with the northern people were chiefly cultivated by women. Far-famed for such arts were Hagberta, daughter of the giant Vagnost, Craca, a Norwegian woman consulted about the future fortune of Rollo, and many others, of whom, as he informs us, a

* Duchesne, *Rér. Francorum Script.* tom. v. 55.

cauldron was the common instrument, in which they cooked juices, herbs, worms, and entrails*.

The practice of these arts continued throughout the world, and came to light from time to time in a manner to alarm the civil government. The fact of execrable rites being ascribed to the Templars, as only showing that mankind was aware of what still existed, is remarkable.

John Trithemius relates how the Fratricelli were first discovered and condemned under Boniface VIII. They pretended always to be holy persons; they did not reveal their worst practices to all at first, but only in proportion to the capacity of their novices; they abolished all sacraments but baptism, said they were full of the Holy Ghost, and could not sin, that no Roman pontiff had any authority after they had been condemned by Boniface, that, excepting themselves, all men would perish for not believing and living as the apostles. Their rule was, *omnia munda mundis*; therefore, adultery or incest were no sins with them. They used to hold their meetings amidst mountains and woods, and in caves—men and women attending, and after invoking the Holy Ghost, would extinguish all lights, and practise every kind of horror. The last-born infant of the company was then passed from hand to hand till it expired, when all the company fell on their faces to adore the person in whose hands it died. The second-born was baked over a brazier and pulverized, and the dust was mixed with wine with horrid imprecations, and then given to their novices to drink as a sacrament; after which they were deemed impeccable within their sect. Boniface VIII. made inquiries all over Italy, where it chiefly prevailed; and by his orders Herman, author of the sect, who had been twenty years in his grave at Ferrara, was dug up and burnt. In Milan there was a rich woman of this sect, named Wilhelma, having a husband Andrea: she affected sanctity, retired to Clairvaux, and died there, and was buried as a holy person. This impious woman, with her husband, had a cave at the end of their house, in which the sacrilegious rites of the sect were celebrated, to which many men and women came by night. The

* Olai Mag. Septent. Hist. lib. iii. c. 13.

women were tonsured like clerks, with imprecations against the clerical tonsure. Wilhelma acted as priestess for a long time, and used to pronounce the prayers. After her death, which was supposed holy, as I said, her husband Andrea persevered six years in the same course, and seduced many, till a merchant of Milan, by name Conrad, discovered all. This merchant's wife was of the sect, whom he discovered rising at midnight and going out of his court secretly. He followed her, traced her to the cave, and succeeded in passing in with others unchallenged, and thus made the discovery. Contriving, as soon as the lights were put out, to take from his wife's finger her sapphire ring, he escaped secretly, and returned home. The next day he said nothing, but some time after asked for the ring, when she replied that it was lost. Still dissembling, he gave a grand feast, and invited all whose wives he had seen in the cave, with their wives. After dinner, "Friends and guests," said he, "let each of you do to his wife what you shall see me do to mine." At which words he pulled off her head-dress, and lo! the tonsured crown appeared. The astonishment of the other men, when they found their wives similarly tonsured, may be conceived. Conrad then related to them what he had seen. The whole was referred to the tribunals. Andrea was burnt with the bones of his wife, and the women were dismissed by their husbands.

This heresy passed into Germany, where as many as four thousand are said to have caught it. These used to go forth at night, like wild animals, to mountains and woods, to hold their sabbath*.

It was in 1440 that the extent to which magical horrors were practised in France came to light, in the prosecution of the Marechal de Rais, of the illustrious family of Laval, who, on being convicted of all kinds of infamy, was brought to trial by the Duke of Brittany, and burnt at Nantes, having confessed the many murders and execrable impieties of which he had been guilty. The Pope's bull, shortly after addressed to the authorities of Languedoc, represented in detail all the operations of magical art, invocation of demons, profanations of holy things, pacts with hell, and the employment of the most

* Chronic. Hirsangiens. an. MCCXCVIII.

criminal human means to injure their enemies; on which latter account, as Berthier remarks, the tribunals of justice were bound to take cognizance of such matters, let their opinion respecting the superstition have been what it might*.

In the reign of Charles IX., Trois-Echelles, who was a famous sorcerer, said that thirty thousand persons in Paris were occupied in sorcery. Catherine de Medicis was said to have worn a talisman composed of a child's skin.

It was, however, during the religious revolution, in the sixteenth century, that the practice of magic prevailed to the greatest extent in every part of Europe, as is admitted by the author of *Letters on Demonology*. Hall's testimony is curious:—"Satan's prevalency," saith he, "in this age is most clear, in the marvellous number of witches abounding in all places. Now hundreds are discovered in one shire; and, if fame deceive us not, in a village of fourteen houses in the north are found so many of this damned brood. Heretofore only barbarous deserts had them, but now the civilest and religious parts are frequently pestered with them." Contemporary writers remark that every sort of horror marked the epoch of the reformers—earthquakes such as were hardly recorded in history, pestilence, famine, sterility of all things, inundations, tempests—troops of wolves, emboldened by eating those slain in the religious war, and having contracted a relish for human blood, prowling over the country, leaving embowelled or half-eaten the bodies of women and children, so that, as Paradin says, God seemed to arm every creature to fight against man in vengeance of his sins—signs in the air, and on the earth, and in the waters, filling all hearts with terror—dire meteors and fearful fires seen in the sky—births abominable in human eyes, seeming to denote the fire of heresy and the monsters of diabolic origin which were desolating the church and drawing down upon sinners the deluge of the wrath of God†.

Above all, the predominance of superstition in countries that had abjured the Catholic faith was truly fearful. The terror which it inspired may be estimated from the

* Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. xvi. 358.

† Hist. de Lyons, lib. iii. c. 42.

brief records of the court books relative to executed witches, comprised in the words "Convicta et combusta." Nevertheless the evil existed elsewhere, and it caused far less alarm with consequences much more dreadful; for the ancient diabolic traditions seemed to have more vigour wherever the antagonist faith was rescuing men from their influence.

In 1751 a law was passed in France which condemned shepherds to nine years of the galleys for a simple threat of throwing a sortilege. This was in consequence of the terror inspired by the shepherds of Brie, the account of which forms by far the most interesting portion of Le Brun's History*. To such rustic traditions Shakspeare makes allusion:—"This boy is forest-born, and hath been tutored in the rudiments of many desperate studies." The horrible sacrilegious rites which came to light in the dungeons of the Bastille, at the epoch of the poisoning society, are further evidence of the same continued tradition†. The confessions of the old priest, Stephen Guabourg, chaplain of the Count of Montgomery, and of Gilles Davot, revealed the nature of the sacrilegious masses of indescribable horror, which were celebrated in a house of the street of St. Denis, for each of which two hundred francs used to be paid; in which the demon was invoked to aid the designs of the poisoners and other wretches. Of these, Mirabeau said, "You cannot believe what nevertheless will be proved to you."

The existence of secret societies in England, bearing horrible names, at whose assemblies the most sacred rites were blasphemously mimicked, gave also further evidence of the same kind. Without remaining, however, any longer to multiply testimonies which all lead to the same conclusion respecting the singular perpetuity and uniformity of diabolic superstition, let us proceed to examine more minutely into the real character of these arts, the history of which we have briefly and imperfectly traced.

Many learned and ingenious writers in modern times have undertaken to explain this dark page of history without any assistance from a belief in supernatural causes; but to the schoolmen their notions would have appeared unphilosophical, and the mere substitution of

* Tom. i. † Mem. Hist. sur la Bastille. Londres, 1789.

unknown words for unknown things. A late author has had the malice to accuse the clergy of having favoured the progress of such a belief, as contributing to extend their own authority : but, not to remark the many absurdities into which such a theory betrays him, the assertions of writers, who always suppose that self-interest, grossly understood, is the motive of every one, merit in truth no attention. The holy Scriptures attest the corporeal appearance and visible operations of evil spirits, as well as the practice of magic and divination. The divine law expressly denounces its penalties against all that use divination, or witches, or charmers, or consultants with familiar spirits, or wizards, or necromancers : and the philosophers of the middle ages could never suppose that these laws were ordained to repress imaginary crimes, nor could they have foreseen that they would incur a charge of craft or ignorance for holding a contrary opinion. The actual exercise of these diabolic arts is ascribed to Menasseh, and to many of the Jews in the time of our Saviour. Among the Gentiles, the most attentive observers of nature did not reject the possibility of reading the future. Hippocrates believed in divination by dreams, of which Aristotle doubted, saying, “it is not easy either to despise or credit them * ;” but, as Melchior Canus observes, “by so doing, the Stagyrите erred against the truth of the Scriptures.”

However unwilling we may be to incur a charge of credulity, we must, I think, conclude that it is not by the inventions of a philosophy which contradicts revelation, that any rational explanation can be given of the phenomena which the schoolmen ascribed to the action of those damnable powers spoken of by the great Apostle of the nations, when he tells us that we have to contend against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in high places. That these invisible agents had a school on earth, no one doubted in former ages. “There is a wisdom of the past,” says Cardan, “a wisdom of the present, a wisdom of the future—there is a divine, a human, and a demoniacal wisdom †.”

All the eminent English metaphysicians of the seven-

* De Anima.

† De Sapientia, lib. i.

teenth century believed with Cudworth in the existence of magical arts, and many, like Fairfax, wrote expressly to expose their danger. They felt that they could not understand the whole of their own nature, much less that they could comprehend the rest of the world and all its unexplored mysteries.

What was the opinion of the ancient Christian philosophers on this head? St. Clement of Alexandria says, "that the school of magic is an academy of hell, where magicians have demons for masters, who teach men that there are certain arts which can compel them to obey mortals." Tertullian says, "that magic and sorcery are the cause of all errors—that they ruin the soul, and constitute a second idolatry *." The attractions used by the demon to engage men in magic were supposed to be sensual pleasure, the hope of escaping from misery, and the desire of riches; as when he said to Christ, "all these things will I give you, if you will adore me." The fascination which they exercised over the human mind seemed almost irresistible: "he who had once swallowed a particle of witchcraft," says an adept in the openness of his heart, "can never keep his fingers from it afterwards as long as he lives. The thing is like the love of drink, once get the taste for it, and tongue, and throat, and lungs, and liver, will never let it go." This explains the saying of Tacitus, that "it is a class of men which will always be prohibited, and will always exist." The schoolmen seem to have entertained no doubts as to the reality of traditional arts of this kind. "Magic is not received in philosophy," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but it is extrinsic—a mistress of malice and all iniquity, alien from truth, and truly wounding the mind, seducing it from divine religion to the worship of demons, causing corruption of manners, and impelling the mind to all wickedness †." They evinced, however, no want of judgment or caution in distinguishing the effect of natural science from the result of such arts. The rule was thus laid down by Suarez, "When one expects an effect from a cause which has not naturally the power to produce it, then the secret is certainly diabolic; for since the effect is above the power of natural causes, and since these practices have no tendency to promote piety, the

* De Anima, cap. 57.

† Erudit. Didasc. lib. vi. 15.

author cannot be any other than the demon*.” St. Agobard, in the ninth century, attributes the illusions of the demon to a want of faith in those who invoked him; for “the demon,” he says, quoting St. Leo, “knows whom he can cast down by sadness, seduce by fear or joy, and deceive by admiration. Though he transform himself into an angel of light one must neither fear nor admire his power†.” According to Pliny, who says that magical art has been in repute in all times, there are three principles of magic—medicine, astrology, and religion—the first as a remedy, the second a mean, the third a cloak to deceive. Tertullian says, that the Devil apes all the mysteries of God, that he is full of emulation to rival even things in the mysteries of the divine Sacraments, so that he baptises, he gives his believers secret marks, such as under the eyelid or elsewhere the paw of a cat, or of a hare, a toad, or spider, and that he celebrates also the oblation of bread‡.”

It was in allusion to these things that the Jews were forbidden by the divine law to make marks or stigmas upon their bodies. King Joachim, after his death, was found to have on his body characters as the seal of Satan, to whom he had devoted himself: for as the Jews, by circumcision, were devoted to God, so the sorcerers pledged themselves to his enemy by an outward rite. Epimenides, who used charms to deliver the Athenians from the plague, was found to have similar marks upon his body.

In the earliest writers we find mention of men making pacts with Satan. The fame of these, in the middle ages, was widely spread: the devil was supposed then to assign a demon to his worshipper in imitation of the guardian angel of the Christians. The sculptured figures upon Gothic temples, representing Satan pressing within his grasp the hand of a man who bends his knee before him, are an allusion to these execrable compacts, of which the church has heard instances in every age. The arch of the north door of the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, at Paris, contains, in many compartments, representations of a diabolic pact and of a deliverance effected by the blessed Virgin, which is related in a metrical

* Lib. ii. De Superstit. cap. 15. n. 9.

† Oper. Agob. t. i. 202.

‡ De Præscript. 140.

legend composed by Rutebœuf in the time of St. Louis. In this entablature, a magician, Salatin, wears a pyramidal bonnet, borrowed, as well as his name, from the Eastern countries, whence occult and cabalistic arts had chiefly been derived. The idea, as we have observed, was no invention of the middle ages. St. Cyprian, who, before his conversion, professed magic, had given himself to the demon in writing: St. Thomas applies to such persons the words of Isaia, “*pepigimus fœdus cum morte, et cum inferno fecimus pactum.*” St. Augustin says, “that the art of magic arose from the superstitions of a society, bound together, of demons and men, established as if by a certain compact of infidel and treacherous friendship*.” One object of this confederacy was to endeavour to efface baptism by some ceremonies, as when Julian washed himself in the blood of the victims offered to demons. Innocent III., in his bull, laments the fact that multitudes of men and women had given themselves to the demon at Mains, Cologne, Treves, Salsbourg, and Bremen, and that they, in consequence, had killed children, denied the faith, and committed every execrable superstition and crime. In Guyenne alone there were said to be, at one time, three thousand persons having the sign of the demon†. Trois Echelles, in the time of Charles IX., affirmed that all his accomplices bore the marks of a hare’s foot. The free consent of those who sought to profit by these hellish arts was deemed essential, and it is a curious fact that even the race of wretched impostors, who pretend to practise them, have taught each other invariably to ask the credulous fools who trust them, whether they come from choice and give from their heart what is demanded.

Some of the wild tales that circulated among the people, respecting the end of persons leagued with Satan, are related by Vincent of Beauvais: they are as terrible as any heart can desire—the following is a specimen: “A certain woman at Berhelia, in England, was a witch. One day, as she sat at dinner, suddenly the knife fell from her hand; she turned pale, and groaning, said aloud, ‘this day it is all over with me,’ and presently a

* Lib. 2. De Doct. Christ.

† Ancoran, lib. 3. De Inconst. Dæmon.

messenger came and told her that her son was dead. She then repaired to certain monks, and sobbing said, 'by a miserable fate I have always served the demon and despaired of myself. Now then I implore you try to alleviate my torments, for you cannot recal my soul from the doom of damnation : sew up my body in a stag's hide and shut it up in a stone coffin, and bind it with lead and iron, and gird the stone itself round with three great chains. If during three nights I lie secure, then on the fourth bury me in the earth : let mass and psalms be sung for fifty nights. Lo ! it was done as she required, but all in vain ; for during the first two nights, as the choir sung round the body, demons came and beat at the door of the church, and burst two of the chains, but the middle one resisted : the third night, about cock crow, there was a sound as if the whole monastery were about to be moved from its foundations ; one demon, more terrible than the others, burst the bars of the door, and strode up to the coffin, and called her by her name, bidding her rise ; to whom she answered, 'the chain hinders me,' 'O ! then you shall soon be freed from it,' replied the figure, and immediately bursting the chain like a straw, it seized her hand and dragged her to the church door, where was a black horse proudly neighing, with hoofs all of iron, upon which that wretched woman was placed, and then she and all the troop disappeared ; only her groans were heard for four miles resounding over the woods.*" In such tales, amusement, of course, was the end.

On the cathedral of Strasbourg, carved in a cornice, is represented the sabbat of sorcerers ; the demons and infernal spirits form the concert, and others in fearful guise are dragging the sorcerers to hell. This alludes to the midnight assemblies of persons for purposes of superstition, which were any thing but the invention of credulous heads. Many sorcerers in different ages have agreed in confessing that, at the nocturnal sabbat, they used to adore the demon under the form of a goat. This, it will be said, was the caprice of their imagination : yet these men had never read Herodotus, who tells us that the God Pan, more ancient than the Gods of Greece, was represented under that form. St. Gre-

* Vin. Bellov. in Specul. Hist. lib. xxv, cap. 26.

gory mentions that the Lombards consulted a goat's head to discover futurity*. Tertullian attests that the same animal entered into the rites of magicians†. It is a fact that, on these occasions, cruel bloody sacrifices were offered, as in the old days of idolatry amongst all nations. The Druids, the Tartars, were all addicted to the same horrors, associated with magic. In the canton of Berne thirteen children were killed and devoured at these assemblies: this cruelty was of itself enough to denote the diabolic tradition descending from heathen times, when the priests of idols, like these sorcerers, required the slaughter of innocents for the due celebration of their rite‡. It is certain, likewise, that at these assemblies there was always an execrable mockery of marriage. Every thing of divine institution was impiously mimicked: above all, profanation of the Eucharist became an essential element in arts of this kind; as was witnessed among the Coterelli in France, mentioned by St. Antoninus§, who turned into ridicule priests and all sacred things; and who were finally destroyed by Philippe Augustus. During the massacres of the Jesuits and friars at Madrid, in 1834, the murderers invariably disfigured the tonsure after fracturing the skulls of the victims, probably from having been initiated in the same traditional school.

Impurity and disobedience were also essential attendants upon the worship of demons; and we may remark, that it was the clear and universal recognition of this fact which rendered inexcusable the infamous politicians who condemned the maid of Orleans as a sorceress; for her devotion, submission, and angelic purity being unimpeached, the mission which she executed could not be ascribed to hellish powers, without contradicting all that had been laid down by the church to guide men in the discernment of spirits.—Hence the Dominican vicar of the Inquisitor refused to take part in the prosecution,—hence the most learned magistrates believed her to be inspired by heaven, to which opinion Gerson and St. Antoninus subscribes,—hence the judges delegated by the Holy See twenty-five years afterwards, cancelled and

* Lib. vii. Epist. 7 & 8. Dial. c. 26. † Apolog. c. 23.

‡ Savonarol. Triump. Crucis, lib. iv. 4.

§ Tom. ii. tit. xvii. § 17.

annulled the sentence against her,—and hence the most cautious and sound historians, in spite of the suggestions of Rabin, have always rendered justice to her memory *.

But to return to the sabbat; according to the popular notion the day of holding it was not the same every where: in Lorraine it was thought to be the night before Thursday or Sunday—in Italy on the Monday; which notions were derived from the depositions of sorcerers. In the penitential canons of Rhaban Maur there are inquiries whether any women boasted of intercourse with demons, and of attending their nocturnal assemblies on the backs of beasts, or even of broomsticks†; and in a capitulary of Charles the Bald, the bishops and priests are exhorted to assure the people in their sermons, that all which such women say of their nocturnal voyages and assemblies is only fable, and passes only in their imagination during sleep‡. Such was the opinion supported by authority in the ninth century§. With respect, however, to the credibility of demoniac arts in general, it must be admitted that the minds of men in the middle ages were at rest; for that all was imagination was what no one then ever pretended. “I know well,” says James of Autun, “that to hear the voice of spirits, is not a thing unprecedented.” He supposes that troops of demons produced the sounds and noises of confused voices heard on the plain of Marathon after the battle of the Persians, and before that of the Cimbri, as also the similar tumult in the air, which so terrified the whole army before the war of Sylla, and at the first battle of Pharsalia. Nothing could overcome the general sense in former times, that there is a number of incomprehensible and marvellous things in the world.

The declarations of holy penitents respecting the demoniac operations with which they had been familiar, would have been thought to present an insurmountable difficulty in the way of those who deny the reality of the traditions which perpetuate them. Giles, son of Vailladaros, commandant in Coimbra, was made a canon and prior when a child; but though his profession was spiritual, he lived in profligacy, and being tempted to study medicine, he

* Berthier, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gall.* tom. xvi.

† Concil. Gen. ii.

‡ Baluz, cap. i. q. 365.

§ P. Longueval, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. vi,

proceeded to apply himself to magic, denied the faith, and during seven years received instruction in forbidden science in a cave near Toledo: he then went to Paris, where he obtained great celebrity. It happened that as he was once secretly employed in his house, there appeared to him a knight with a lance in his hand, and a terrific countenance, who rushed upon him as if about to kill him, crying out, Amend thy life, godless wretch! Giles was filled with terror, but after some days, he recovered his composure, and lived as before: a short time elapsed, and again the same knight appeared to him, more terrible even than before, crying, Amend thy life, or thou shalt die! Giles fell to the ground and uttered but these words, "Yea, Lord, I will amend, I will amend." The knight touched his side next the heart with his lance, and vanished. Giles, thinking himself mortally wounded, called to his servants; his flesh was found to be whole, but it was true that his heart had been touched, for it was wholly changed. He ordered a fire to be lighted in his hall, threw all his magic books into it, and departed for his father's land. On arriving at Valencia, he applied for admission among the Dominicans, who received him into a new convent there, but during seven years he had to sustain the most horrific visions of the spirits of darkness, who sought to draw him back again, so that he used to declare he would a thousand times prefer having his head cut off to beholding them but for once: he finally became a man of eminent sanctity, and in 1233 was made provincial of his order*.

St. Augustin, speaking of the power of good and evil angels, says, "that neither the good have any power, unless, as far as God commands; nor can the evil act unjustly, unless as far as he justly permits. For the malice of the wicked hath an unjust will, but it hath its power only justly, whether for its own penalty or for the punishment of others that are wicked, or for the praise of the good†." The magicians themselves say, "*Magna est potentia Sathanæ propter hominum magna peccata‡.*" The learned Leo Allatius relates a curious circumstance, which fell under his own observation. It is now thirty years ago since I embarked at Scyo to go to Messina; on that

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 320.

† De Trin. lib. iii. c. 8. ‡ Arbatel de Magia.

voyage after some time a tempest rose, which threatened us with destruction. Observing the pilot contemplating the waves, making signs and muttering words, I went up to him in a rage and said. What are you doing there? Is this a time to abandon the helm? The old man replied, See you not that I am breaking the force of the waves with this sign of the cross, and certain words? Observe now and see that it is every ninth wave which puts us in danger. Strange fact, it was even so. My curiosity overcame my fear, and for more than one hundred times it was always the ninth wave which seemed most terrible. This word and signing proves the superstition of the pilot, and probably that he had made a pact with the demon, who redoubled the excitation of the ninth, to nourish the credulity of the pilot*.

Whatever may be thought of this narrative, it is curious to find the same superstition mentioned by Ovid, who speaks in his *Tristia* of the tenth wave. That impure men who sought not to see God, endeavoured to profit by an intercourse with demons, is a fact which does not admit of question, and the appearance of malicious artifice in the mode by which such persons were generally deceived, is not a little strange. History is full of instances. Forte Braccio, a great captain of Sienna, was betrayed by his familiar demon, whom he had asked whether he should go to battle, and had his answer in writing, *Ibis, redibis, non morieris*; but a comma transposed made it, *Ibis, redibis non, morieris*. A relative of the famous magician condemned by the parliament of Provence, had attempted to seize the duchy of Castro from the church. He asked his demon, if by taking arms he could seize the town of Castro, defeat the papal troops, and even push his conquests to Bologna? His answer was, *Ingredieris castrum, conculcabis Ecclesiam, Bononia tibi serviet*. Confiding in this promise, he marched, was defeated, and taken prisoner.

He then began to suspect the treachery of his demon, *Ingredieris castrum*—Lo, he is in a castle. He asked the servant what prison was under him. The servant replied, it was the chapel—*Conculcabis Ecclesiam*. Finally, he asked the servant his name, I am called Bologna. “Ah, wretched man,” he exclaimed, “the prediction of my master is accomplished.” To such the prophet of old

* *Tractat. de quorundam Opinat. Grar. c.*

alludes: "I am the Lord who render useless all the predictions of the diviners: I reverse their understanding, and I change their wisdom into folly *." On the other hand there are many strange relations difficult to be set aside, respecting predictions of diviners, confirmed by the event.

Michael Scot is cited as a great theologian by the most learned of the Carmelites, and the prince of the Averroistes, John Bacco†. He was, nevertheless, a great astrologer, and, as such, is mentioned by Agrippa: he enumerates twelve kinds of auguries, from Fernova to Harrenan, corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac‡. Certain it is that he foretold to his master the Emperor Frederick Second, that he would die in a castle of Apulia, named Fiorenzola, and also in a church—all which came true, for being bareheaded in the act of appearing to adore Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, the cord of the bell that they were sounding caused a stone to fall on his head, which caused his death on the spot. The astrologers consulted by Louis XI. are more noticed by historians, on account of the rich reward bestowed upon them, than for the certainty of their predictions§, though it is said that Angelo Catto announced to him on giving the peace at mass, in the church of St. Martin at Tours, that at that moment the duke of Burgundy was slain at Nanci. Celebrated in later times was that prediction of the old astrologer, who was brought into the supper room of the Duke of Nemours, where he was entertaining Albert Mirandula and the French knights, who accompanied him on his expedition, who then foretold the event of the approaching battle, and added in full detail the end of the duke, whose hand, however, he never examined, as also that of Bayard, of the Seigneurs de la Palisse and d'Imbercour, and of the adventurer Jacquain Caumont. It is remarkable that some of the strangest superstitions should be traced from the most remote antiquity, and found among all nations. Such is that opinion of there being to names assigned a charm profound expressive of future destiny—mysterious potency of sound, which even the wise Æschylus seems to

* Isa. xliv. † Part 3. Sentent. dist. 33.

‡ Mic. Scoti Liber Phisionom. lvii.

§ Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. xvii. 129.

credit in his Agamemnon, when it is observed that Helen's fatal name and destruction are the same; and to which Shakspeare has made us all familiar, by that scene of death in which the fourth Henry demands, Doth any name particular belong unto the lodging where I first did swoon? and who, on being told that it is called Jerusalem, exclaims "Laud be to God! even there my life must end; it hath been prophesied to me many years I should not die but in Jerusalem, which vainly I supposed the holy land; but bear me to that chamber, there I'll lie, in that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

Such, again, is the notion of the guilty sleep of sorcerers, as due to their previous crimes in waking hours. Let us hear a wild narrative in illustration: "A hunter, near Poligny, in Burgundy, wounded a wolf that was running by him, which continued on his way though the ball had evidently gone through him. Greatly amazed, the hunter followed him by the track of blood till he came to a little cabin, where, on entering in, he found a man wounded near a woman, who was putting a plaister on the hole. The hunter denounced this man as a sorcerer, and certain it is that the wretch confessed to the judge his custom of changing himself into a wolf, by means of an ointment made by the demon. This history was written on parchment, and hung up near the door of the Dominicans at Poligny." The notion on which this narrative is founded was most ancient, and so widely spread, that the most illustrious men have condescended to mention it. "That the human body," says St. Augustin, "can in any manner by the arts of the demon, be converted into bestial members, I could never believe*." "On the other hand," he observes, "that miracles by magical arts, can be performed similar to those effected by the servants of God;" and St. Thomas says, "in the proper sense of the word, miracles cannot be performed by demons, or any other creatures, for a miracle strictly speaking, is that which is contrary to the order of all created nature, but if it be widely understood, as an effect exceeding human faculties, the demons can work miracles, as was seen with the magicians of Pharaoh; and though material bodies are not subject to their power, they can be transmuted by them as to form, by virtue of certain seeds, or natural

* De Civ. Dei, xviii.

qualities, which are in the elements of the world; these mutations, indeed, are not real, as if human bodies could be changed to bestial bodies, or raised from dead to life; but if such operations should sometimes appear to be effected by demons, it is not done in reality, but merely in appearance, which can be effected by the demon working on the imagination of men, or even exteriorly on the senses, so as to make things seem otherwise than according to truth *."

The perpetuity of the same kind of pretensions is at all events a curious fact in this history. Cardan, as well as Sir Kenelm Digby, speaks of a manner of anointing a sword, so as to wound and cure at a distance. The influence of demons upon the air, was a most ancient opinion. The magic art of Eric of the windy hair was celebrated in the North. "This Eric, king of Sweden, was second to none in such arts," says Olaus Magnus, "and being familiar with demons, in whichever direction he turned his hair immediately the wind blew; whence his surname, *Ventusus Pileus*†." Cornelius Agrippa says, "that by burning a cameleon on the roof of a house, with cabalistic rites, he can raise a storm. The great tempest which passed through all Bohemia and Germany, at the time when John Huss began to preach heresy, was thought to have been caused by sorcerers; and from a similar notion the whirlwind over Newark, during the night of St. Luke's day, when king John expired there, filled the inhabitants of the place with terror‡."

Particular places possessed an odious fame for the acquisition or practice of these arts. Such were the sorcerers' caverns near Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca, the entrances to which were walled up by order of Isabella, the wife of Ferdinand. Of the former many extraordinary things were recounted. The great historian of that city relates that Roderic, the last king of the Goths, caused to be opened, contrary to the will of all men, an ancient palace at Toledo, which had been always shut up and secured with locks and bars by former kings. He had expected to find treasure within it, but he found only one chest, which contained a cloth, exhibiting Latin letters, and pictures of men, with the countenance and

* P. l. q. cxiv. art. 4. † Sept. Hist. lib. iii. 13.

‡ Rad. Coggesh.

arms of Arabs, sitting upon horses, having their heads bound with vines, and wearing vests of many colours, and holding swords and javelins and banners; and the letters stated, that when the locks were broken, and the chest and palace opened, the nation represented by these figures would come and invade Spain. The king and grandees were alarmed, and made the chest and palace fast as before *. Cornelius Agrippa speaks of Saturnian places, such as dark, subterraneous, deserted, and solitary caverns, marshes, cemeteries, graves, and waste tracts †, to which corresponded birds of Saturn, such as have long necks and hoarse voices, cranes, owls, bats, and ravens, emitting sounds, that in rough winter oft inflict a fear on fireside listeners, doubting what they hear. In particular he mentions a Norwegian mountain, Hecheberg, whence lamentations and groans, and horrible shouts and shrieks are heard, while huge vultures and ravens hover over it; and he speaks of similar mountains in Thuringia and Scotland, where wicked intercourse was thought to reign ‡. Ilsingbourg, a wild looking village, situated at the entrance of a narrow gorge, through which dashes a mountain torrent, is described by a recent traveller, “as one of these Saturnian places. I never saw an inhabited spot more fitted to be the scene of some dark deed done in the eclipse than this. A barren waste leads to it—a hundred hills covered with tangled forests, fence it round—and high above their heads, rises the Great Brocken, amidst whose deep covers superstition has been cradled for ages.”

Another branch of superstition often combined with the profession of magic art, was alchemy, the mere terms of which bespeak an alliance with the spirit of idolatry, for all the old accursed fancies were employed in it. “I know that gold is made by alchemists,” says Cornelius Agrippa, “and I have seen it made §.” Geber of Seville, in the eighth or ninth century, was one of the first in this track. Trithemius mentions many who were deceived by it. He was himself accused by Boville. “This Boville,” says he, writing to Ganoy, “affirms, that I, Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim, was a magician, ne-

* Roderici Toletani de Reb. Hisp. lib. iii. c. 18.

† De Occult. Phil. lib. i. c. 48. ‡ De Occult. Philosoph. lib. iii.

§ De Occult. Phil. i. 14.

cromancer, and alchemist. I cite you to answer for this calumny, at the tribunal of God: I declare that I never so much as entered a theatre of alchemy." Wernher, of the counts of Falckenstein, archbishop of Treves, left such a treasure, that he was accused of alchemy. Trithemius says, "that he has seen books on it written by him, and that in his castle on the Rhine, called Capella, opposite Lanstein, he had professors of that vanity at work secretly. John, of the marquesses of Baden, who was his successor in that see, was similarly accused on account of his keeping during twelve years, in his castle of Cunengen, George, from Croatia, who was said to have run away from the Turks. Bernard, abbot at Northheim, in Saxony, left 10,000 florins at his death to his monastery, which it was thought he had gained by alchemy. Andreas, another abbot, near Bamberg, was also addicted to it, as was likewise John, the last count of Spanheim, who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, in company with Louis the bearded, count Palatine of the Rhine, for he had always alchemists, necromancers, and magicians, at his court, whom he could not be induced to banish, and he thought that he could understand the language of dogs and birds*."

But we must not remain any longer on this demoniac ground. In justice, however, to the men of former times we cannot leave it without making a few observations in conclusion. If interrogated as to their opinions respecting the possible existence of such a tradition as that to which magical arts have been ascribed, the most favourable reply that could be expected from philosophers of the present day would probably be that of Orlando, "I sometimes do believe, and sometimes do not." Yet some men of great intelligence and discernment, who have travelled in the East, are ready at the present day to attest their conviction that the effects of imposture or credulity cannot explain all things that were presented to them as marvellous in those countries. The facts related by Lane, and observed by many other travellers in Egypt, relating to the power of magicians, are not less astounding than any thing found in records of the tenth century. They assure us that there are men professing Satanic magic, who can communicate by their mirror of

* Chronic. Hirsaug. An. MCCCXCIX.

ink, placed in the hand of certain persons, the exact image of others at a distance, whom they are desired to produce. Some, it is true, suppose, contrivance, and rest that opinion upon the testimony of Jannisaries to themselves, but other and no less unimpeachable witnesses profess their inability to explain the mystery by any natural cause. One instance mentioned is that of a young English lady, who, on looking into the magic mirror in her hand, after a little while said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without any one holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer *. But whatever may be our conclusions respecting such pretensions it must not be forgotten that, whether they be credited or not, the books of magicians are themselves monuments existing and constituting insurmountable evidence to prove the atrocity of magic study. Not that it is easy to discover who were really devoted to it; for, as Tertullian says, “*Nihil magis curant, quam occultare quod prædicant, si tamen prædicant quæ occultant* †.” The maxim of the book on magic entitled *Arbatel* is this:—“*Qui vult secreta scire, secreta secrete sciat custodire et revelanda revelet: sigilanda sigillet, et sacrum non det canibus.*” Nothing can have a greater show of piety and judgment than their first address. Jerome Cardan says that his father, who was so much occupied with the occult sciences, used to have always on his tongue that sentence, “*Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum quia ipse est fons omnium virtutum* ‡.”

“Magician!” replies the youth Alfonso to the monk who bids him beware of Petro of Abano, “so you, too, would take part in the folly of the rabble, that is unable to appreciate the knowledge of lofty spirits, and would rather credit any absurdity than strengthen their own souls by gazing upon the grandeur of a fellow-creature. Did not you yourself see and hear how piously, how christianly, with what a heart-stirring majesty, the glorious man spake §?”

Cornelius Agrippa dedicates his books on occult philosophy to no less a person than the reverend abbot of Hirschau, John Trithemius, and says to him, “When, of late, I conversed with you, reverend father, in your

* Lane's Egypt, i.

† In Valent. c. 1.

‡ Hieron. Card. de Vita Propria, i. 3.

§ Tieck.

monastery at Herbipolis, we talked together on many things concerning magic and cabalistic matters, and other hidden sciences and arts, which are secrets as yet." So artfully written are his three books, that he obtained this approbation from the abbot:—"Of your work, which the most learned of the learned is not able to praise sufficiently, we approve." In fact it is full of erudition, and there are many passages which one might suppose to have been written by a Thomas of Kempis or a Louis of Blois. The author seems to abhor impiety; and he reckons among those who have vindicated occult philosophy from that crime, and have transmitted it purely, Roger Bacon, Robert the Englishman, Peter Apponus, Albert Teutonicus, Arnold de Villeneuve, Anselm of Parma, Picatrius of Spain, Cicchus Asculus of Florence, and many others. We know already what to think of his sincerity in counting some of these among men who wrote in favour of occult philosophy, and in placing them by the side of Peter Appono and Anselm; the latter of whom was admitted to be a magician by Delvio and Bartholomew Cocles. Moreover, that every thing holy may be imitated, in the beginning of his work he declares that he wishes no one to assent to whatever he may say, or to imagine that he himself assents to it, unless so far as it is not reprobated by the Catholic church and the body of the faithful. He styles magic the most perfect and the highest science, the most holy philosophy, and the absolute consummation of wisdom*." Yet he reckons among its pillars Zamolxis and Zoroaster, Abbaris, Charmondas, Damigeron, Hermippus, Trimegistus, Porphyrius, Jamblichus, Proclus, Plotinus, Germa Babylonicus, Apollonius Thyaneus, Osthane, and others. So here we begin to see light, when the pillars of his most holy science are heathens and notorious magicians. But one must wade through many obscure pages before coming to this frank avowal of the diabolic tradition. The prayers of these men for wisdom, for memory, for power over others to lead them from evil, are really sublime and astonishing†.

"Let the word of God never depart from your lips," says Arbatal on magic; "accustom thyself to constancy

* Lib. i. c. 2.

† Ars Notoria, quam Creator Salomoni revelavit.

and gravity in thy words and actions; fly worldly things; seek celestial; learn not many things, but much; invoke me in the day of tribulation, and I will hear thee—but all ignorance is tribulation of mind; invoke the Lord, therefore, in thy ignorance, and he will hear thee. Let the Sacred Scriptures be in thy hands by day, and yet by night: a magician ought to be a pious man, good and constant in words and actions, firm of faith towards God, and avaricious of nothing except wisdom *.”

Such is the style of all these writers. The Chiromancians alleged Scripture for their science, and cited the words, “*Qui in manu omnium hominum signat, ut noverint singuli opera sua*†.” Cornelius Agrippa says, that a true magician must be pure, and holy, and devout. Yet, while his general language might be mistaken for that of a cloistered ascetic, while he lifts up the soul, and seems to guide it heavenward with words and images of inspiration, bearing his scholar as with the wings of the Spirit into regions above the earth, every now and then, amidst these beautiful sentences and solemn prayers, some expression occurs to startle one—some dark letter—something of pure Paganism, as it were a cloven foot peeping from under the religious habit‡. Thus, after saying that the mind must be purified and expiated by cleanness, abstinence, penance, and alms—suddenly, as if forgetting his part, he cites the authority of the Indian Brahmans, and prescribes the use of cabalistic words. He even recommends the practice of confession, to procure that purity of conscience which is requisite for such studies; and then he lets escape that the object in view has been obtained by the ancient philosophers, who, by solitude and keeping aloof from all human affairs, were enabled to converse with sacred and celestial beings. Strangely at variance with the sanctity of his rules is his mention of the forms familiar to the spirit of Saturn—a bearded king riding on a dragon, an old bearded man, an old woman leaning on a staff, a pig, an owl, a black vest, a juniper. The atrocious cruelty of some of his prescriptions is also enough to awaken suspicion. Thus he says, when you collect the tongue of a frog, you must not kill the creature, but send it back alive into the water; and

* *Arbatel de Magia.*

† *Job.*

‡ *De Occult. Phil. lib. iii. c. 53.*

similarly, in extracting the eye or tooth of a wolf, you must not kill the animal *. Then, as if warmed by the subject, he seems in some parts to throw off the disguise, and shows how men are to compose the book of spirits, or order for invocation, written on virgin parchment: it is to be carefully preserved, and never opened excepting under the proper circumstances; it is to be consecrated, by invoking to a circle all the spirits inscribed within it: the book is to be placed without the circle, in a triangle, and they are then charged to ratify and confirm it. For this operation the book of spirits is placed between two tablets, on the inside of which are written the sacred pentacula of the Divine Majesty, from the first chapter of the Apocalypse. Then, on a serene night, before twelve o'clock, the book is carried to a circle at the juncture of three ways, and there the spirits inscribed are conjured thrice, by the bonds of the book, to come to that place at the end of three days. Then the book is wrapped in clean linen and buried in the midst of the circle, which is afterwards effaced. One departs before sunrise. On the third day, before midnight, one returns, makes the circle, prays on bended knees, opens the foss with a quoit, takes up the book, and, without opening it, departs †. About to invoke bad spirits, he says, "You must prepare a table in the place covered with clean linen, on which are four loaves and water, or milk, in new earthen vessels, with new knives; and you must sit at the head of the table, leaving seats round it for the spirits; but if you fear them, describe a circle round your own seat and part of the table, while the rest is without it."

But somewhat too much of this. John Trithemius, in his apologetic preface to his books, *De Steganographia*, addressed to Philip, Duke of Bavaria, describes various kinds of magicians, and recommends the prince to extirpate them. "The demons," he says, "in order to keep voluntarily in their service the men who have made a pact with them, pretend that they are subject to them, and feign to obey them by constraint. What evils this pernicious race causes in your empire no one can express. The necromancers profess arts worthy of all execration, by which they can call demons to a circle,

* I. 21.

† *De Occult. Phil. lib. iv.*

and bind them with a pact. They use shameful sacrifices, and write books full of turpitude and lies, falsely citing the names of ancient philosophers and wise men, to deceive the curious."

To all occult sciences the philosophy of the clean of heart was essentially opposed, on the very ground of their being occult. St. Augustin applies the command, "take no purse with you," to the duty of having no secret wisdom. "What is a purse?—money shut up, that is, occult wisdom. A fountain ought to be in you, not a purse—whence you may diffuse, not where you may confine * " St. Hilary, commenting on our Lord's words, "Quod dico vobis in tenebris," says, "We do not read that our Lord was accustomed to discourse by night, and to deliver his doctrine in darkness; but he used this expression because all his sentences are darkness to the carnal mind, and his word is night to infidels†." It was opposed to these sciences, too, on the ground of their vanity; and this is shown by Dante, when Grifolino of Arezzo relates how he had told Albero of Sienna that he had learned to wing his flight in air; for he adds,—

" And he, admiring much, as he was void
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him
The secret of mine art †."

It was opposed to them, also, on the ground of the misery which they entailed on men; for the church had yearly to lament some intellectual wreck, and cry,

" ——— this is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality."

It was opposed to them, above all, from a deep sense of their guilt; which Dante also indicates in that passage where he shows diviners and prophets among the spirits whelmed in woe:—

" A tribe that came along the hollow vale,
In silence weeping—
Each wondrously seem'd to be revers'd
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance

* Serm. 42, De Sanct.

† Comm. in Matt. x.

‡ Hell. xxix.

Was from the reins averted.
 — Lo ! how he makes
 The breast his shoulder, and who once too far
 Before him wish'd to see, now backward looks,
 And treads reverse his path.
 See next the wretches who the needle left,
 The shuttle, and the spindle, and became
 Diviners !—baneful witcheries they wrought,
 With images and herbs *.”

Finally, it was opposed to them, as feeling that to the clean of heart who beheld God their light was as darkness. Men without the church have, in all ages, been addicted more or less to errors and vanities, which on their conversion to it they learned to despise. St. Augustin confesses ingenuously that he used to take pleasure, before his conversion, in the study of judicial astrology, but that he abandoned all faith in it when he returned to religion.

Cardan says, that a great chest could not contain all the letters he had received from the English demanding predictions, from the Germans demanding calculations, from the Italians asking for medicines, and from the French requiring moral discourses. But towards the end of his life he discerned their vanity; so that he says, “ I destroyed many of my books, which had cost me great labour; for whatever did not conduce to the salvation of the human race, if it could also injure, I resolved not to leave existing; and though it might have been better not to have written, yet it is with writers as with animals, which cannot live without leaving traces †.” How many converts, in modern times, have similarly been corrected and induced to give up a thousand prejudices and singularities which had once charmed them.

The neighbourhood of the Moors in Spain contributed to develop the taste for the study of occult sciences, but men were not wanting to oppose it with learning and ability. The work of John Francis Picus of Mirandula, entitled *De Rerum Prænotione*, furnished a curious and able refutation of superstition; and the work of his great uncle against astrologers was still more remarkable. The holy Fathers and the schoolmen had acquired a deep

* XX.

† De Libris Propriis.

insight into the different superstitions of the world, with a view to war against them.

“I have given my heart to know prudence and doctrine, and errors and folly: it is of true devotion, therefore,” adds Richard of St. Victor, “to contemplate both good and evil, to investigate, discuss, and subsequently to judge all things. True devotion, consequently, from investigation and inquiry, has something in common with the wise men of Babylon; so that, deservedly, it may be said to be of their college. Nevertheless, they differ by the intention; for true devotion investigates vain and perverse doctrines, not for the sake of adhering to them or of placing any confidence in them, but that, by judging, it may disprove and condemn them*.”

“We read some books,” says St. Ambrose, “in order that they may not be read; we read lest we should not know what they were; we read not to approve, but to condemn, and that we may learn on what ground these proud men exalt their hearts†.” This was conformable to the text which saith, “The disciple of wisdom knows ancient things, and conjectures the future; he knows the turning of words and the solution of enigmas; signs and prodigies he foresees, and the events of seasons and times‡.”

St. Dunstan, amidst his multifarious learning, is said to have been conversant with the magic songs and incantations of his Pagan forefathers. The abbot Trithemius, himself a man exceedingly well read and profited in strange concealments, shows that, in order to refute them, it was lawful to read hastily the books of the astrologers. Among his own writings he enumerates five books to John Marquis of Brandenburg, *contra maleficos et omnes artes vanos superstitiosas et Christianæ religioni contrarias*, twenty books, *naturalium quæstionum*; and two books against Boville. “Without learning, without having studied their own science, how could my uncle Picus of Mirandula,” says John Francis, “have written that admirable work against the astrologers? St. Jerome says, if any one were to write against the mathematicians without having studied ma-

* De Eruditione Hom. Inter. p. i. lib. ii. c. 7.

† Expos. Evang. Luc. i. 2.

‡ Sap. vii. 17.

thematics, he would be only laughed at for his pains. To read my uncle's work, you would suppose that he had read nothing but the books of the astrologers: therefore did he undermine them. Who of the ancients ever slew astrology, that monster, like a hydra, which, as often as one head was cut off, used to push forth another, until Picus, not a feigned but a true Hercules, destroyed her with the learning of tongues and the fire of divine love *."

Of this work Savonarola, who also wrote against the tradition of the astrologers, says, "He who reads and understands it, and does not laugh at the science which it confutes and annihilates, certainly deserves himself to be laughed at by all men †."

So far we have been replying to those adversaries who charge the church with unreasonable severity and superstition in combating superstition. It remains to consider upon what ground others accuse her of having been herself obnoxious to the charge of exciting and perpetuating superstition in the society of the middle ages. We have already seen enough to enable us to appreciate the value of such witnesses as the late author of *Letters on Demonology*, who says that the clergy were resolved to nourish the belief in witches, as a source both of power and revenue, knowing that a faith in all the absurdities of the vulgar creed was necessary to maintain their influence. "Did there remain," he asks, "a mineral fountain respected for the cures which it had wrought, a huge oak tree, or venerated mount recommended to traditional respect,—the Fathers of the Roman church were in policy reluctant to abandon such impressive spots, or to represent them as exclusively the rendezvous of witches or evil spirits. They assigned the virtue to the guardianship of some saint, and thus acquired a frontier fortress for their own doctrine."

Though such are the views with which the most popular English author writes history, I cannot delay to make any reply to such passages. When a heedless contradiction of all historic testimonies is substituted for argument, the folly is in him who stays to answer. The

* Joan F. P. Mirand. de Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philos. lib. i. c. 7.

† H. Savonarolæ *Triump. Crucis*, lib. iv. c. 4.

strongest ground in appearance, on which the opinion which I combat can be defended, must be sought for in the facts respecting ordeals, and the abuse to which religious practices were liable ; yet neither of these positions can be maintained when a knowledge of history is brought to bear upon them. “ Could a person during some Christian ages,” asks Lenglet Du Fresnoy, “ have questioned the proof of hot iron without being regarded as impious * ? ” This is a strange question from a learned man. The canons and the sovereign pontiffs every where condemned the vulgar purgations or judgments of God by cold or hot water and iron, or by battle,—all which the barbarians brought with them into Christendom †, though their traces can be found in the Greek poets. St. Avitus, in presence of King Gundobad, condemning judicial combats, and the king arguing that they were necessary, for the same reason as wars were necessary between nations, to determine the judgment of God,—the saint replied, “ If kings and nations seek the divine judgment, let them first fear what is written by the Psalmist, ‘ Dissipa gentes quæ bella volunt ;’ and let them remember that sentence, ‘ Mihi vindictam : ego retribuam, dicit Dominus.’ Cannot the Supreme Equity judge causes without swords and weapons ? And do we not often find that the just side is worsted in battle, and that the unjust triumphs ‡ ? ”

Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, composed a treatise entitled, “ *Contra damnabilem Opinionem putantium Divini Judicii Veritatem Igne vel Aquis, vel Conflictu Armorum patefieri.* ” He condemned them as wanting divine authority, as rash, profane, and injurious to God. The ordeals were imposed by the civil legislation, and resisted by the councils. Pope Lucius III. declares that these sorts of proofs are prohibited by the canons. The council of Tribur merely permitted the trial of hot iron in acquiescence with the laws of the state, where there was no other way possible. In the time of Hincmar these ordeals were all styled “ *adinventiones humani arbitrii §.* ” By the council of Valence, in 855, under

* L’Hist. Justifiée, 136.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canon. lib. iii. tit. ix. § 1.

‡ Agobardus lib. advers. Legem Guadobadi.

§ Le Brun, Hist. de Sup. tom. ii. 236.

King Lothaire, judicial combats were condemned: the victor was pronounced excommunicated, and the body of the slain was forbidden Christian burial. When this King Lothaire afterwards wished to submit his cause to the judgment of the sword, Pope Nicholas I. remonstrated, and showed him that such a proceeding was against the divine ordinance.

In the eleventh century, Hildebert, a bishop, writes to Ives de Chartres, to ask whether he ought to undergo the trial by ordeal, in compliance with the requisition of the King of England; who replies to him, "that the church knows of no such custom in ecclesiastical cases. Do not, then, transgress," he adds, "the ancient limits placed by our fathers—*aliter namque innocentiam defendere est innocentiam perdere* *." In fact, Ives de Chartres wrote many letters against the ordeals, in which he showed their absurdity, and cited the words of Pope Stephen V., forbidding them as superstitious inventions, when Lambert, bishop of Mayence, inquired whether he could permit the old usage. Ives reproves the clergy of Orleans for having sanctioned a judicial combat; "but," says Stephen Pasquier, "the real fact was that it was difficult to reverse the ancient usage which prevailed so much under the third race of French kings. The first of the French kings who prohibited it was St. Louis, whose prohibition was afterwards renewed by Philip Le Bel †." The personal remonstrances of holy men were, however, often efficacious against it. Thus John Seigneur de Baugency, in 1186, was so touched at a censure which he received from the abbot of St. Maximin, for having assigned day and place for a single combat to verify a right which he claimed, that he chose rather to renounce his claim than go that extremity ‡.

The Popes Sylvester II., Celestin III., Alexander III., and Innocent III., reiterated the prohibitions of the trials of God §. Innocent declares that the judgments in the secular courts, of cold water, hot iron, and the duel, are invalid by the sacred canons, which deem null and void:

* Ivon. Carnot. Epist. lxxiv.

† *Récherches de la France*, iv. 1.

‡ Bernier, *Hist. de Blois*, 259.

§ Decret. tit. 35. De Purgatione Vulgaris.

all extorted confessions *. Innocent, after solemn deliberation with his brethren, declares that a certain bishop, because he had lent his authority to a judgment of hot iron, and had exhibited his corporal presence at it, is unworthy of the ministry at the altar, and consequently deprives him of his episcopal office †. The same pontiff declares that the ecclesiastical authority rejects all ordeals on the ground of the sacred text, “Non tentabis Dominum Deum tuum ‡.” This was according to the decision of the scholastics. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais’ work says, “that the judgment of hot iron or water is superstitious and unlawful, because its object is to discover hidden things, which are reserved for the divine judgment, and also because for such a method there is no sanction of divine authority §.”

The council of Lateran, in 1215, absolutely prohibited all ecclesiastics from authorizing, by any benediction, the ordeals of water or iron, and in fact the practice was every where completely abolished in the thirteenth century. Even Sir Matthew Hale says, “The trial by ordeal seems to have ended with King John. Perchance the barbarousness of the trial and persuasions of the clergy prevailed at length to antiquate it; for many canons had been made against it.” “The canon law,” says his commentator, “very early declared against it, upon this authority. Though the canons themselves,” he adds, with amusing simplicity, “were of no validity in England, it was thought proper to abolish this mode of trial by an act of parliament, in the third year of Henry III., or rather by an order of the king in council.”

With respect to the charge founded on the abuse to which religious practices were liable, we shall find a satisfactory answer by pursuing the same obvious method of calmly interrogating history. Evidence will then be found to prove that such abuse existed not where there was much but where there was little piety—not where the clergy exerted themselves with zeal, but where they slept—not where the voice of the Holy See prevailed, but where that of the opinions opposed to it were pre-

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. v. 107. † Id. lib. xiii. 134.

‡ Id. lib. xiv. 138. § Spec. Mor. p. iii. lib. iii. 27.

dominant. It is even a singular fact, that the men who most prided themselves on their jealousy of the Holy See were in general the most superstitious, as may be witnessed in Stephen Pasquier, the doughty champion of the Gallican liberties, who is continually alluding to omens and prognostics.

The superstitious use or application of what is intrinsically good and holy belongs to the corruption of our fallen nature. The object of the Catholic philosophy, however, was not to destroy what was good and holy, but to prevent men from abusing it. The ceremonies and practices of religion might easily have been abused, say modern writers. True: but what may not easily be abused? Who has ever walked on a serene evening, and seen the moon rise suddenly in the east, without feeling how easy it was for men to fall upon their faces and adore it. Are we to condemn the Creator, then, for the beauty and glory of his works, because the unclean of heart could not behold and magnify Him in them? The ecclesiastical spirit, in this respect, may be witnessed in the character ascribed to Pope St. Gregory VII. by old writers. "This most holy man," say they, "was a determined reprehender of all such superstitious customs in the church as crept in among the multitude, through rustic simplicity, without the authority of Scripture*." And similarly we read of Benedict XIII., that when archbishop of Siponti he was particularly attentive lest ignorance, superstition, curiosity, or frivolity in some, fraud or cupidity in others, might give occasion to abuses at Mount Gargano—that church so celebrated since the fifth century. He went there often for his own edification, but he also went to instruct the simple pilgrims who flocked there from all parts; and he examined the conduct of the clergy, and made many wise regulations to preserve the purity of divine worship, and to guard off every thing that could corrupt it†. Incidental notices of similar zeal might easily be multiplied, as where Paradin mentions the discovery of a superstition practised on the eve of St. Stephen, made by the precentor of the old church of St. Stephen at Lyons‡.

* Guil. Neubrig. iii. 20.

† Touron, Hist. des. Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. lib. 41.

‡ Hist. de Lyons, lib. i. 41.

We find the church sometimes obliged to guard the people from entertaining extravagant notions of obligations resulting from a reception of solemn rites, as in the instance formerly alluded to, of a popular error in the thirteenth century respecting extreme unction. Richard, bishop of Salisbury in 1218, the fathers of the synod of Worcester in 1240, those assembled at Exeter in 1288, and at Winchester in 1308, denounced and prohibited such superstition*. That children born on the ember days were more capable of having familiarity with spirits, was another superstitious fancy, which some attempted to associate with religion†. But here, surely, the clergy were not in fault. The usage of supernatural remedies was not inconsistent with the employment of measures recommended by sober reason and exact science. Pope Stephen V., in the year 885, when locusts desolated the country about Rome, had recourse, first, to the latter, offering money to whoever destroyed a certain number; and this failing, he used supernatural means, and appointed prayers and aspersions.

The zeal of the clergy in the eleventh century, against superstitious devotion, may be strikingly witnessed in the fourth book of Guibert de Nogent, *De Pignoribus Sanctorum*, which is entitled “*De Interiori Mundo.*” “*Pious Jesu!*” he exclaims, “how many saints whose end is doubtful, and yet before I pray to one I ought to be assured of his sanctity. There are many of whom we know neither the birth, nor the life, nor the death; and although the faithful honour them for the name of sanctity, yet the priests do not judge rightly who do not censure and amend the vulgar; for the zeal which the people have towards God ought to be according to knowledge, lest they should sin through ignorance. He who ascribes to God what he never thought, as far as in him lies makes God to lie. If any one were to accuse me, a miserable mortal, of falsehood, or of doing what I did not, it would fill me with horror; and what more fatal, more desperate, more damnable, than to ascribe falsely any thing to God, the fountain of all purity?” If this writer goes on to expose the deceitful practices of some monks, with respect to false relics, and encourag-

* Mabillon, *Præfat. in 1. Sæc. Bened.* § 9.

† Thyraeus *de Apparit. Spirit.*

ing the people to believe persons saints without just reason, it should be remembered that he himself who speaks thus is a monk, revered by his fellow monks, and an abbot venerable among abbots. Besides, it must not be forgotten that such an abuse had been carefully provided against, as by the Fathers of the council of Frankfurt in 794, who decreed that no new saints should be honoured excepting when the authenticity of the acts of their martyrdom, or the sanctity of their lives, warranted their being judged worthy of reverence in the church *. In the year 806, Charlemagne, by a capitulary, prohibited his subjects from rendering homage to any new saints without the approbation of the bishop. "Some," continues Guibert, "ascribing the greatest antiquity to their saints, desire their lives to be written in modern times. This is often sought from me; but what truth can I affirm of those whom no one ever saw? If I should say what I have heard said, and I am asked to speak in praise of these ignoble persons, both I and those who desired me to say such things would deserve to be publicly held as no longer trustworthy. The head of the Baptist is said to be at Constantinople; and again, the people of Angers say it is with them. What can be more ridiculous?—as if he were double-headed! If they mutually dispute about its possession, and accuse each other, they are doing not divine but diabolic works. If it be the head of another saint, still a falsehood is not a moderate evil." Finally, however, he restrains a zeal which was almost leading him too far, and says, "Some think that when relics of one saint are mistaken for those of another, the error is pernicious to the people, which is not my opinion; for when the Lord says of them, 'that they may be one as we are one'—when the whole universe of saints, under Christ their head, is as it were one body,—there is no error if the bones of one be venerated for those of another; since all are united fellow members in the body of their author. Nor do I imagine that God will refuse to hear the simple, when they invoke Him even by those that are not saints; for if they faithfully believe those to be saints who are said to be such, their prayer cannot but please God, to whom all prayer is

* Longueval, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. v. 31.

made, even though they should have been deceived; for they who in the name of a prophet received the prophet, are to receive a prophet's reward. The illiterate, no doubt, often lie in their prayers; but God regards intentions, not words. God is not curious of grammar; no voice moves him; He looks at the heart*."

With respect to the recognised practices of devotion in the church, there seems to be no reason to doubt but that the piety of the people during ages of faith was as enlightened and as far removed from any thing like superstition, as the most cautious philosopher could desire. "Of false honour," said St. Bernard, "there is no need to the blessed Virgin, on whom are accumulated its true titles." All exaggeration was foreign to genuine piety. Those who have studied with attention the spirit and manners of the Catholic society in any age will feel perfectly satisfied on this head: *non enim philosophi solum verum etiam majores nostri superstitionem à religione separaverant*. Cowley, relating a vision which he had, says, "that he fortified himself privately with the sign of the cross;" adding, "not out of any superstition to the sign, but as a recognition of his baptism in Christ †." The distinction only shows that he had been conversant not with Catholics, but with those who misrepresented and ridiculed their faith.

Of other popular opinions in the middle ages, generally classed under the head of superstition, a thoughtful observer will probably be disposed to take a different view, and to conclude that they admit of being transferred to different ground, and otherwise defended. "We have seen many future things truly predicted by just men on their death beds," says Guibert de Nogent, in the very work in which he combats superstition ‡. William of Paris, in his book *De Virtutibus*, says, "you should know that the gift of intelligence is of such brightness and intensity in some men, that it very much resembles the spirit of prophecy, such as some persons believed to have been in the abbot Joachim, though he himself is said to have said of himself, that there was not given to him the spirit of prophecy, but the spirit of intelligence."

* *De Pignoribus Sanct. lib. i. c. 4.*

† *A Discourse concerning Oliver Cromwell.*

‡ *De Pig. Sanct. lib. i. c. 2.*

“Consider, if you can,” says Richard of St. Victor, “how much the thought of future things avails with God, which is so often divinely rewarded by a revelation of the future. Hear a man solicitous for the future, and occupied with its interests: *Nunquid in æternum projiciet Deus et non apponet ut complacitior sit adhuc? Aut in finem misericordiam suam abscindet à generatione in generationem?* Hear the same man taught of the same, and profoundly illuminated in the things about which he enquired: *Miserator et misericors dominus, longanimis et multum misericors, non in perpetuum irascetur neque in æternum comminabitur* *.” Truly there is satisfactory evidence to prove that the prophetic spirit was not wanting in ages of faith†. The Blessed Hugo de Dina predicted the destruction of the Templars long before that event took place, after they had been 184 years gloriously militant. Being at Marseilles in 1278, these knights shewed him their long and beautiful refectory, which he curiously sought to measure twice or thrice, and upon their asking him what he thought of it, he replied, that it would be an excellent stable. They took umbrage at his reply; but the event verified his words, when under Clement V. their institute was destroyed, and Robert, king of Sicily, coming to Marseilles, converted it into a stable. This is he who is buried honourably with the Minors in that city, or who after death shone with miracles‡. St. Liudger foretold, that after his death the Normans would come down and destroy the churches, and lay waste the country, but that the time of mercy would afterwards arrive§. That the curiosity of vain men should have been strongly excited by the report of such things, was a natural consequence; and hence many wild legends became current, such as this, which, Orderic Vitalis tells us, the Norman princes used to relate. In the time of Rollo, they used to say, a certain mysterious stranger was received to hospitality by a knight into his hotel at Rouen. While seated in the chimney with his host, the latter began to question him about many things, and principally about Rollo, asking

* De Erudit. Hom. inter. lib. i. P. 1. 19.

† Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 202. ii. 209.

‡ Wadding, An. Min. vol. v. 1278.

§ Vita ejus Mabil. acta. S. Ord. Ben. sæc. iv. P. 1.

him, whether his race would endure long. He replied, that it would, and that his dutchy would exist in vigour till the seventh generation. Upon the host then asking him, what would happen after the seventh generation, he wished to make no reply, but only began to trace furrows in the ashes of the hearth with a little piece of wood that he held in his hand. The host persisting in his attempt to draw an answer from him, as to what would happen after the seventh generation, he, with the little piece of wood which he kept ever in his hand, began to efface the furrows which he had made in the ashes: from which one thought that, after the seventh generation, he implied that the dutchy would be destroyed, or suffer great tribulation, which we have seen accomplished, says the writer of the supplement to the History of William of Jumièges; for Henry, the late king, was the seventh of this line, and the first who possessed till his death Normandy and England. We may remark, however, that the race of prophets, which was so multiplied in countries that embraced the new opinions, ever predicting, as in London in times of calamity, the vengeance of God and the end of the world, was not allowed to abuse the people in the middle ages. An instance occurred in Germany, in the year 847, when the pretended prophetess was condemned, by the ecclesiastical authority at Mayence, to be publicly scourged *.

It is true, some of the old errors still lingered, and faith, which puts an end to them, satisfying the natural desire of the human mind, could not enter where hearts were yet unclean.

Dark time had there its evil legend wrought
 In characters of cloud, which wither not :
 The change was like a dream to them ; but soon
 They knew the glory of their altered lot,
 In the bright wisdom of youth's breathless noon,
 Sweet talk, and smiles, and sighs, all bosoms did attune.

We have before alluded to the joy diffused around the feudal hearth, when pilgrims would begin, " I will tell you now what never yet was heard in tale or song, from old or modern bard, in hall or bower." We then heard some mention of the legends respecting dead men return-

* Ann. Metens. ad. an. 847.

ing to the living, of the curious anecdotes related by holy and observant men, who were in point of truth heroical. But the fact undoubtedly is, that the clean of heart beholding God, had many thoughts in common with the illiterate, which pass with men who read in books alone for fabulous: religion sanctioned, philosophy confirmed many of these wanderer's tales, founded upon a wide observation of nature, and attested by faithful witnesses; so that, as the poet says,

— Ever as they sailed, their minds were full
Of love and wisdom, which would overflow
In converse wild and sweet and wonderful.

So many and so grave are the testimonies, both heathen and Christian, to the reality of apparitions, that even the cautious Cardinal Bona says, "It is wonderful how any man of sane mind can be found to deny them, or ascribe them to a deluded imagination*." The modern writers themselves observe, that "their abstract possibility must be admitted by every one who believes in a Deity and his superintending omnipotence." Let us hear a narrative fitted for rehearsal when next we pace up and down some long Gothic chamber at the twilight hour. Peter the Venerable relates a vision which he had at Rome, in the monastery of Santa Maria Nuova. William, the late Prior of Cluni, who had shortly before died, appeared to him, and spoke, in reply to the questions put to him by the abbot, respecting his own happy state, the vision of God, the certainty of the Christian faith, and the cause of his own death, which he affirmed weeping to have been by poison: "So it was afterwards proved," he adds, "on my return to France, by the public confession of the prisoner. During all the time that this vision lasted I felt conscious that I was not sleeping, and I proposed my questions in the shortest manner possible, from supposing that he could not remain long conversing with the living. I awoke weeping†." The denunciations of the church against superstitious interpreters of dreams, were not inconsistent with the words of Dante,—

"Sleep, that bringeth oft tidings of future hap ‡."

* De Discretionem Spirituum, cap. xix.

† Pet. Ven. De Miraculis, lib. ii. cap. 25.

‡ Purg. xxvii.

The Emperor Henry III., indeed, involved himself in censures when, having had a dream respecting Hildebrand, then a young novice, which was interpreted to forbode that he would be the cause of depriving Henry's son of the crown, he cast him into prison. "He commanded," says the old chronicle, "that the clerk should be thrown into a dungeon in the castle of Hammerstein; but when the Empress often objected to the Emperor, that, forgetful of his own honour, he had imprisoned a scholar on account of a vain dream, after the expiration of one year he gave orders for his deliverance, soon after which the novice became a monk *."

What the church combatted was the superstitious curiosity. Her axiom was—

" Seek not to know what must not be reveal'd,
Joys only flow where future is concealed :
Too busy man would find his sorrows more,
If, what was coming, he should know before."

She did not however teach men to reject historic testimony, in order to deny the possibility of such forewarnings. "It is not lawful for any one to doubt," says Cardinal Bona, "but that some dreams are true, and sent from God †." Calixtus II. had a divine intimation of what awaited him, in a dream, the night before his arrival in the monastery of Cluni, where, without his suspecting the circumstance, the Pope Gelasius II. had died, and where he was himself elected to succeed him the moment after his arrival. Baptist the Mantuan, the Carmelite poet, writes to John Francis Picus of Mirandula, and says that he believes he saw John Picus his uncle, after his departure from life, in a dream which he had about break of day, and that he discoursed with him about points of philosophy: "I awoke," saith he, "and felt persuaded that I had seen something. I write this not that I yield any faith to dreams, for that is alien both from my profession and my nature, but because I cannot sufficiently admire how a sleeping man could dispute, and teach, and learn, and do what, if he had been awake, would have been impossible, or very difficult for him to have done. Truly our souls are divine, and if we live

* In Menken Script. rer. Germ. tom. iii. 88.

† De Discretione Spirituum, c. xvi.

holily and piously, and keep ourselves free from the trammels of secular affairs, these separated spirits have great commerce with us. The death of George Merula, my condisciple, and afterwards my preceptor, affected me with sadness, but he was aged and useless for any office : the lamentable fate of those two illustrious men, Hermolaus and Politian, caused to me and to all men of letters a pang of heart, but this wound is deeper still ; and in Picus, learning has had even a greater loss *.”

Marsilius Ficinus, in a letter to Matthew Corseno, his fellow philosopher, gives many instances of the death of parents and friends being revealed to persons at a distance at the moment of their departure †. Celebrated was the account of the Marquis de Rambouillet appearing, with his wound in the groin, to the Marquis de Pr ci, his friend, at six o'clock in the morning at Paris, the same moment that he received his death in Flanders, the next post bringing the intelligence ‡.

Beyond a doubt there was much error and absurdity connected with the belief in such things, and men might have often reaped great benefit from consulting the book of Eginus Augustus Libertus, entitled “*Palaphatus de non credendis Fabulis* :” we should not then perhaps have heard so much of Hugue-the-Corps, so called from his cadaverous figure, who strangled Milon de Month ry his cousin, for the sake of his riches, and afterwards became a monk ; who it was thought used, after his death, to be seen by night in the forest of St. Germain. This is silly, sooth ; and who could enumerate all the romantic marvels which were associated in young heads during days of chivalry, with the forest of Broceliande alone ? Such wild tales as Pliny mentions, and Olaus the Great relates of northern seas, may be ascribed rather to the want of sufficient observation, than to a positive superstition. Others must be traced to the barbarous legends of the Scandinavian tribes ; as when we read of the castle of King Hrothgar being nightly visited after supper by the horrible Grendel, silent, joyless fiend, who comes from the morasses of the mountains, and enters the hall, seizes the sleeping warriors and devours their feet and hands, whom Beowulf overcomes ; when the

* Epist. lib. ii.

† Mars. Ficin. Epist. lib. i.

‡ Le Brun, tom. iv. 367.

mother of Grendel comes there, eager to revenge her son's defeat, stalks at midnight into the court to glut herself with victims, but is put to flight by the knights: when afterwards the two demons used to be seen roaming over the moors, howling like wolves, their abode being deep in the dark waters stagnant there. Others again may be ascribed to some optical deception or atmospheric effect. Baptist Fulgosus, Duke of Genoa, relates, in the first book of his acts of great persons, that in the court of Matthieu Visconti, of Milan, there was seen, one evening after sunset, a knight armed cap-a-pie, whom many persons watched in great astonishment during the space of an hour till it vanished; when soon after died the Emperor Henry VII., who was the great friend of that family.

At the same time, that men were not "all-believing," as some now report them, may be witnessed in the judicious remarks of the monk Taillepied, in his treatise on the apparition of spirits*. If the author of the essay on the manners and spirit of nations evinced ignorance in affirming, as a critical observer, that the history of the middle ages contained nothing but barbarism, he did not err less when, wishing to admire it as a poet, he composed those verses, so often cited, which describe the pleasure of believing in fairies, of hearing chaplains relate tales of ghosts, and of enjoying what he terms the advantages of error. The spirit of scrutiny was quite as much alive then, as now, with regard to such things; and at the chimney corner, on a winter's night, the page as well as the castellan, while listening to the palmer's tale, would turn a deaf ear to the dreams of decrepitude, and that too on the principle expressed by Æschylus, *δείσασα γὰρ γράυς οὐδέν* †.

Torquemada relates many curious examples of terrific tales arising out of trivial circumstances: "Only a short time ago," he says, "at this very place where we are, a certain woman, desiring to rise very early about some affairs, and not finding any fire under the ashes, though she had carefully covered it the evening before, sent her servant out with a candle desiring her to light it; but the servant, going from house to house, nowhere found any fire, it being still three hours before

* Rouen, 1600.

† Eumenid. 38.

day; but at length she perceived a lamp burning in a church; she called to the sacristan, who was sleeping within, and he awoke and lighted her candle. The mistress, tired of waiting, had taken another candle and had found a fire in another house, and she came out with her light just as her servant was returning with her light, and they were both in white: now a neighbour having risen, and looking out with eyes hardly open, and seeing them thus coming out, he thought they were phantoms; so that the next day there went a rumour that there had been a procession of spirits that night round the church. However, upon close enquiry, I found that the truth was what I have now stated*.” He relates another instance arising out of the solemn burial of a noble knight in a certain monastery of Spain; when a poor idiot, having strayed into the church, and remained after the doors were closed, took shelter from the cold under the great velvet pall which covered the coffin. The monks coming into the choir to sing matins, the idiot awoke and made a noise, which troubled the religious men, who, however, continued to sing their matins, and then retired. The rumour of what had been heard spread far and wide, every one adding something, till at length the poor idiot disclosed what she had done, to the great amusement of all the world.” However, some of his tales are left in all the obscurity that any one who loves the wonderful could desire. “A remarkable instance occurred,” he says, “about thirty years ago at a place two leagues from here, Fontaines de Rossel, where was a gentleman of great authority named Anthony Costillo; and I can bear witness that it was one of the most stout and courageous men in all this country, for I have seen him in great dangers, from which he delivered himself valiantly: but as he was a man who would not suffer any one to do him an injury, he had some that wished him no good, so that he was generally on his guard. Now it happened one day, that he went out of his house well mounted and carrying a lance in his hand, and so he rode to another village called Villanuova, where he transacted certain affairs till it was nightfall, and it became very dark, and then he prepared to return to his house; but on going out of the village there was a little

† Hexameron, iii.

hermitage, and a chapel with a lattice of wood before and a lamp burning within, and it seemed to Anthony Costillo that he ought not to pass on without saying a prayer, so he pulled his rein and began to perform his devotions, remaining on horseback; but as he looked into the chapel there seemed to him to be a certain phantom ready to advance towards him, so that being afraid he turned his bridle and began to ride away, but the phantom seemed to have got before him: he commended himself to God and turned back, but it was still before him; he pushed forward with his lance extended against it, but he only struck the air; if he hastened it hastened, if he stopped it stopped. In this manner he had it for a companion till he reached his house, before which there was a great court, and when he alighted and opened the first gate, he saw it still before him in the court; and when he came to the door and called out, and was let in, it vanished. But he remained greatly troubled, so that his wife supposed his enemies had done him some injury; and as he would not inform her what had happened she sent for a great friend that he had, a man of authority and a learned man, who came immediately, and found him greatly changed and like dead, to whom Costillo related what had happened, and the other comforted him and persuaded him to banish the recollection of it: but on his departure, and on being left alone, the same terror again seized him, and so he continued till the seventh day, when he died." Now says one of the hearers, "if there had been some physician near him, he would have shown that it all proceeded from a melancholy humour which made him fancy that he saw really what in fact had no existence." "As for me," replies another, "I should rather ascribe it to the operation of the devil, and to the hidden judgments of God*."

In the *Roman de Rou*, a different spirit is ascribed to Richard the good Duke of Normandy, and the two tales placed thus side by side are remarkable as illustrating the difference between the clean of heart and the impure, on occasion of such visions. "By night wandered Richard," says the legend, "as well as by day; and from his strolling so much by night, people said that he could see as well in the dark as other men in the light. This

* *Torquemada, Hexameron, trad. d'Espag.*

custom he had in his wanderings, when he came to any church or monastery, he would, if he might, enter to pray; and if he might not, he would pray outside. One night, as he was riding thoughtfully along, he passed by a church, and wishing to pray to God in it, he tied his horse outside; within he found a corpse on a bier, yet close to the bier he passed, threw his gloves on a desk, and knelt before the altar; which gloves he forgot on coming away. The earth he kissed while he prayed. He thought the corpse moved: he turned round to look on it; 'Lie still,' said he, 'and move not. Be thou a good thing or a bad, rest thee in peace I say.' Then signing himself, he said, '*Per hoc signum sanctæ crucis libera me de malignis Domine Deus salutis.*' Then rising to go out, he repeated, 'Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' But lo! a demon seemed to oppose himself: Richard, however, lifted his sword and smote the figure, and came out to his horse, when he discovered that he had forgotten to take up his gloves: then returned he to the church and took them. Few the men, I think, that would have entered the church a second time! After this, he gave orders that no corpse should be left alone till it was buried."

Religion thus dispelled all vain terrors; so that Dante borrowed from the common speech of men, in making that reply—

" I will instruct thee briefly why no dread
Hinders my entrance here. Those things alone
Are to be feared whence evil may proceed;
None else, for none are terrible beside *."

But the middle ages were conversant with stranger themes than any such wild legends as these. "I know it to be true," says St. Vincentius, "that a soul may return, for I had been defamed by a certain detractor, and he came, after death, and sought my pardon†." The sister of St. Thomas of Aquin, abbess of St. Mary at Capua, appeared to him after her death and told him of her state in heaven, and of the condition of his two brothers, Andulph being still in purgatory and Raynald already in Paradise. Again, one night as the Angelic Doctor prayed in the church of St. Dominic at Naples,

* Hell, ii.

† Drexel. de Vitiis Linguæ, cap. xvi.

Father Romain, to whom he had ceded the chair of theology at Paris, appeared to him before the other had heard of his death, and told him that he was amongst the blessed, and answered many questions of St. Thomas; and to his query respecting heaven replied, "*Sicut audivimus sic vidimus.*"

Trithemius, in his chronicle of Hirschau, relates the following occurrence which took place in 1321. "Godfrid was a dyer in the town of Bruchsall, in the diocese of Spire, a frequenter of drinking houses, and a singer of light songs, scurrilous, addicted to cups and tables, gesticulations and rhythmes, and one who never thought about saving his soul. Falling sick, he had great remorse and profound sorrow; so he sent for a priest, to whom he made a devout confession, received the communion, promising aloud to do penance if God should spare him. Relapsing into silence in about an hour after, he seemed to expire—this was about seven o'clock in the evening, on the twenty-fifth of May. As the night was advancing, they would not bury him till the next day; so during that night the neighbours assembled and sat round his body, which was placed on a bier, and talked variously about the fate of his soul. At two o'clock in the morning he sat up, and said, 'O God, how just and hidden are thy judgments! Blessed be thy name, who hath been merciful to me penitent.' All in an instant fled; some through the window, as the door was too small, others over the people's heads, in short as they could. Godfrid rose, went into the garden, and knelt down, where he was found still kneeling at sunrise. The crowds gathered round, and the priest, who had heard his confession, came and said, 'Godfrid, how is it with you?' but he, making the cross on his mouth, said 'O wehe! O wehe!' and thus groaning, walked to the church and entered, followed by the priest and all the people. There he fell prone on the pavement before the altar, with arms extended in a cross, and remained two hours. Then rising up, he said to the priest, 'Lord, what doth this people want?' 'They wish to know,' replied the priest, 'whether you were really dead, or where you were, or how you have come back to life.' To whom he replied, 'there is a time for speaking, and a time for silence: let them go home, for they will hear nothing from me at present.' So saying, he prostrated

himself again on the earth. The people, by the priest's order, left the church, all but four of the chief inhabitants with three priests: and when the crowd was gone, the priest charged Godfrid on obedience to speak. 'O good men of God!' cried he, 'if I had one hundred mouths and as many tongues, I could not relate the one-thousandth part of what I have seen and heard since with those below. Yea, I was dead, and for penitence, by God's mercy, permitted to return to the body. After my soul, with incredible pressure and grief, had gone out, I was presented at the divine judgment, though how or by whom I know not. So full of sadness was I, that the whole world could not contain or understand it. All the sins of my life, to the very least, were clear and open before me. O good God what confusion, what immense calamity encompassed me! I cannot say it, nor, without unutterable horror of heart, think of it: neither can I relate what was said to me by the judge, and the surrounding angels, and the demons, for it was ineffable. In a moment I was in the place of eternal and of temporal punishment, where I saw more souls tormented than I thought could ever have existed from the beginning, or could ever exist till the end: yet I knew and understood who every one was. I saw souls in hell of whose salvation no one in this life ever doubted; and I saw souls in purgatory, reserved for salvation, whom the judgment of men had pronounced to be unquestionably in hell. Think not that the disposition, quality, and mode of punishment bore any resemblance to what painters and preachers represent: I felt that these torments could never be expressed by signs or tongues of men, for they are quite beyond what the human intelligence can conceive; so that our description of them, compared to reality, seemed like children's play. O! I would rather weep now than speak, only that you command me on obedience to speak. O, misery of all miseries! far surpassing all thought; how horribly and unutterably are to be dreaded the torments of eternal woe! for the perpetual fire of hell lasts in the soul, which is always agitated with a fury inconceivable, always desolated with a terrific sadness, always associated with restless demons, without hope, without consolation, without any respite—only every thing is seen, and heard, and felt spiritually, and not as we figure it. There are

various places of purifying flame, daily some are liberated, daily others arrive, all have the certain hope of deliverance, though the hour is not known. Much availeth the suffrages made in the charity of God, and the pure fasts in the love of Christ, and the immolations of the Lord's body and blood in the church. At the moment of my presentation such a crowd of souls came from the world to be judged, that it seemed as if the whole human race had died with me: and lo! all of them save twelve heard the sentence of the reprobate! of these twelve, one was a friar of the rule of St. Francis, the other a poor beggar and leper, and these two passed straight to heaven, and the other ten had to pass first through purgatory. Lo! all that I have said is still only uttered in the way of similitudes, for I saw nothing with my carnal eyes, but remote from all senses, without a voice or any similitude, in a moment I spiritually saw and heard all. And now, lord, that I have obeyed you, and spoken, spare me and yourself from henceforth, for I will speak of it no more to you or to any one. Endeavour to lead the people to repent, and preach to them what you think useful.' From that time, Godfrid lived twelve years in such austerity of life, that no one could doubt but that he had seen greater than what he said. No one ever after saw him smile, or joyous, or sleeping, or idle; no word useless or idle ever passed his lips more; no one saw him angry, or impatient, or heard him murmur against any one, or speak evil of those by whom he was injured, and they were many: winter and summer he went barefoot, in one grey vest always clad; he never shaved his beard, he daily fasted save on Sunday, neither ate fish nor flesh nor tasted wine: injured or derided, always was he silent, and however injured never did he change his countenance. With the labour of his hands he supported his wife and children; he was always employed, constantly in prayer; he slept four hours at night; daily before the crucifix he knelt and gave himself stripes, seven times he repeated the Pater, and seven times kissed the earth in form of a cross; he often confessed, and daily heard mass. On feast days, he either prayed alone in his chamber with the door shut, or withdrawing into a neighbouring grove he walked alone with God. He slept on the naked ground and had a stone for his pillow; and so lived till his death, when he

was buried in the parish church before the altar of St. George*." For such a soul terror, perhaps, was the only medicine.

A similar vision was granted to Wettin, a monk of Reichenau, on Sunday the 29th of October, in the year 824. This was written down by Hetto on tablets from the mouth of Wettin. The following year Walafried Strabo, who was of the same monastery, verified the relation in a Latin poem, and not only Germany, but the Christian world, immediately received the vision as genuine†. "Here," says a recent historian, "there is no room for incredulity. If the vision of Wettin be rejected, so may every other fact of history."

But it is time to bring this chapter to an end, and return to observe the blessed clean of heart, in their enjoyment of the sight of God.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE observation of the visible world was not the only study subservient to the ultimate object of the pure. Indeed this was but an elementary step in their progress to the highest illumination, and even the next left them at an immeasurable distance from the clearer vision to which they subsequently attained. Having shewn that the ancient Catholic society evinced an inherent antipathy to Paganism, and that it possessed a philosophy complete in itself, we may naturally be called upon to account for a fact which seems to rise in contradiction to such views, and to explain upon what ground so much importance was attached to the study of the ancient philosophy. With what diligence the holy Fathers had studied the writings of the ancients, has been already shewn. St. Augustin spoke in terms of such admiration of the Pythagorean wisdom, that afterwards in his retractions, he was obliged to qualify it, lest, as he says, it might be thought that he supposed Pythagoras to have erred in nothing, whereas he did in many and capital points. It

* Ad an. 1321. † Mabil. Acta, san. Ord. S. Bened. tom. v.

is true we find a distinction sometimes made between the studies becoming youth and age. Thus Lanfranc being asked to solve certain profane questions, replied to Domnoald, "to solve these questions of secular letters, is not the business of a bishop; formerly, indeed, we spent our youthful years in such studies, but assuming the pastoral care we determined to renounce them." However, as Mabillon observes, the examples of Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and other holy bishops of the early church, will prove, that it was of immemorial usage for the holy doctors to be learned in the writings of the Gentiles*.

Such then was the fact, but the difficulty arising from it is soon removed; for to account for their fervour in studies of that kind, we have only to observe that the stores of Pagan erudition imparted to their eyes, in a certain manner, the sight of God, since that ancient philosophy enabled them to confirm religion by the testimony of human reason, and to behold divine truth in the great original traditions of the human race. In the middle ages it is true the study of heathen philosophy seemed less necessary than in primitive times; for, even in the fifth century, the Pagan superstition was so fallen, that some Christian writers thought it useless to argue any longer against it, but others, amongst whom appeared the monk Evagrus, maintained that it was still highly important to treat on it, in the way of contrast with the holiness and simplicity of our religion†.

Touron says, "that St. Thomas studied the Pagan philosophers, in order to refute those weak minds, which thought a thing might be true according to faith, and not true according to the philosophers; and that he only sought to show that even these philosophers confirmed faith, since of truth might be said, 'tuum erat ubicumque erat.'" Plato, that sweet and wondrous stranger, as a French theologian styles him, was introduced into the Christian school, as a witness the most renowned and admirable of the ancient philosophy; Aristotle was found useful, because all that had been saved from the wreck of human science was contained in his books, and he had treated on most subjects of thought with method and perspicuity. The Christian schools, therefore, laid hold

* Præf. in III. Sæcul. Benedic.

† Ap. Dacher. Spicileg. tom. x. 3.

of the Stagyrice, as after the deluge one would have taken possession of whatever monuments had escaped the waters. "It is well to collect every thing good," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "from the Greeks and Barbarians *." Such, too, was the maxim of the middle ages. "If it should happen sometimes," says Alanus de Insulis, "that you are transferred from the books of theology to those of the earthly philosophy, you should look at them in passing, and observe whether you cannot find something to edify manners, which is agreeable to the Catholic faith, that the Hebrews may be enriched with the spoils of Egypt, that gold from the Egyptians may be applied to the construction of the tabernacle, and wood to the building of the temple." "Sic tamen transire debemus," he adds, "in aliena castra, ut simus exploratores et peregrini, non incolæ †."

Hugo of St. Victor, on the same ground accepts the service of the heathen writers. "How many monuments of excellent genius," saith he, "have they left, where the secrets of nature and occult properties of things are investigated! We read of arts, and study, and discipline, and many precepts of reason, which they discovered with the faculties given to them, and transmitted in writings to their posterity—logic, ethics, mathematics, physics, on the form of reasoning, and of life and manners, on the disposition and order, and causes, and progress of all things; and they were able on this side to apprehend truth, because, by them, who were not the children of life, was to be administered that truth which was not to life. Therefore was it given to them for our sakes, for whom the consummation was reserved, that they should find that truth which it was necessary the children of life should receive for the service of the highest truth ‡."

The inconstancy respecting the reception or rejection of the books of the Stagyrice, in the university of Paris, concerning which Launois wrote a book, entitled on the Various Fortunes of Aristotle, only shews the unwillingness of that body to admit the study of philosophy, as

* Stromat. lib. i. 9.

† Alani de Ins. Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 36.

‡ Hug. St. Vict. Comment. in Coelest. Dion. Hierarch. lib. i. c. 1.

forming a distinct faculty from that of arts*. His fate had been settled from the first; since, as St. Thomas observes, "faith had for ever determined the metaphysical question; but as a logician, it was clear he might be received, and those who merely employed him for that purpose were never reprobated†." It was in this latter capacity that his writings exercised such an influence during the middle ages, and, besides, as Staudenmaier remarks, "he was regarded as an authority, for having shown that every science rests upon three things, on principles, definitions, and demonstrations, or syllogism‡." The same observation was made by Francis Picus of Mirandula, in his work on the Study of Divine and Human Philosophy, in which he shows the utility that may be drawn to the Church from the study of the Gentile writers. "Alluding to its love for Aristotle," he says, "nor does the theology of the university of Paris seem to me to be any thing but a certain mixture of divine doctrines, developed or confirmed by natural reasons; a beautiful and honourable mode of combating the adversary, using thus his own weapons to conquer him. For it is an admirable thing to show to the impious, that the nature itself which they say they follow, demonstrates to us that we should acknowledge and honour the Creator, casting off all superstitions, while nourishing and holding fast the true religion§."

Already, therefore, we can perceive how the study of the ancient philosophy was made by the clean of heart subservient to the purposes of that vision, in which their eternal happiness was to consist. But another manner of pursuing those studies, still more conducive to the same end, consisted in the exercise of discovering from them the great original traditions of the human race, which perpetuated in some degree the remembrances of the first divine revelation. It is remarkable that the wisest of the ancient philosophers themselves recognized this object as the most important of all in philosophic pursuits.

* Keuffel Hist. Schol.

† Berthier, Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles, XII. XIII. XIV. and xv.

‡ John Scot, &c. 463.

§ Joan F. Picus Mirand. de Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philosophiæ, lib. i. 3.

Pindar constantly appeals for his authority to the old traditions of men *. Socrates ascribes to them all that he knows: "it is clear to me," he says, "that I must have heard this from some of the ancients, for that I have not known it from myself I am convinced, being assured of my own ignorance. It must have been poured into me as if from a vessel, though I have forgotten how and by whom †." "Let us advance to this discourse," says Critias, "invoking above all the Gods Memory, since to her we must trust for the greatest things, and the whole of this argument, for it is by remembering and recording the things which were delivered by the priests, and which were transmitted to us by Solon, that we shall fulfil what is now required of us ‡." Plato even thinks that men are preserved from the greatest crimes by the influence of such traditions, conveyed by general language and by poets. All his provision for the virtue of a state is in prescribing that the government should take energetic measures to preserve uncorrupted the ancient maxims and traditionary wisdom of men, so that neither poets nor actors in theatres, should ever dare to contradict them §.

Cicero, in arguing to prove the immortality of the soul, speaks of the necessity in the first instance of searching into the doctrines of antiquity, of those ancients whom Ennius calls *Cascos*, who all held that the soul was immortal; and he appeals also to the pontifical law and ceremonies, which rest upon the same conclusion. He believes souls to be immortal, on the ground that all nations agreed in believing it; "for whatever they held with one consent, is to be considered," he says, "the law of nature ||." He pays no regard to what single voices may utter, but to what is perpetual and constant ¶.

"Above all things," Quintilian says, "it is proper to know and keep ever in mind the sayings and deeds of the ancients;" and, indeed, "though," as St. Clement of Alexandria says, "the self-conceit of the Greeks proclaimed certain men to be masters," and though Aristotle says, "that the first philosophy on all points did but lisp like a child **," it would have puzzled them to

* Olymp. vii.

† Plato, *Phædrus*.

‡ Critias.

§ *De Legibus*, lib. viii.|| *Tuscul. lib. i.*

¶ V. 10.

** *Metaphys. lib. i. c. 4.*

point out any eminent sage who did not owe his most important knowledge to a primitive universal tradition. The most ancient philosophers known, Zoroaster, Confucius, Thales, and Pythagoras, did not appear earlier than five or six hundred years before Christ, and certainly they conferred no light which had not before them been imparted by those sublime traditions concerning God and the creation of the world, which existed among the ancient Etrurians*, and in all other parts of the world, as was observed by the holy Fathers, who collected so many of them in their writings†, deducing them from those Hebrews, who, alone, according to an ancient oracle, possessed wisdom.

Many of the Fathers and especially the Greek, considered philosophy and religion as having emanated from one common source. Justin Martyr thought that the former was an internal revelation, by the λόγος‡, Clemens and others, that it had been borrowed from the Jewish scriptures§, St. Augustine, that it was an oral tradition||. Tertullian, however, says, “that there are many noble and beautiful passages in the writings of the Gentile philosophers, which were suggested to them as if by natural light and common sense¶.” “Although the Greek philosophy,” says St. Clement, “does not attain the fulness of truth, still it prepares the way to the most kingly discipline, in a certain manner inspiring temperance, and typifying, as it were in bas relief, the manner of studying truth**.” In another place he says, “The Greek philosophy is like a torch, which men light when the sun goes down. But when the word arose, the holy light shone forth, and the torch was useless††.” “Paul, in his Epistles,” he continues, “does not seem to condemn philosophy, but only him, who having attained to the true gnostic height, should afterwards recede again to the Greek philosophy, the rudiments of the world, which served but as a preliminary instruction to truth. The wisdom of this world, which he condemns, is the wisdom loving pleasure—loving itself,

* Seneca Quæst. Nat. ii. 45. Suidas in Voce Tyrrhena.

† Clem. Alex. Protrept. vi. Stromat. v. 14. vi. c. 6.

‡ Apol. ii. 50. § Strom. i. vi. 5. || De Civit. Dei, viii. 2.

¶ De Anima. ** Stromat. i. 16. †† Strom. v. 5.

which teaches nothing but the things of this world*.” They who say that philosophy comes from the devil, should remember what the Scripture saith, “that the devil transformeth himself into an angel of light.” What doing? clearly prophesying. But if he prophesy as an angel of light, then he must speak truth. If he speak angelic and luminous things, then these are useful things. But in a Catholic sense all things necessary and useful to life come to us from God, and philosophy was as a domestic testament to the Greeks, to prepare them for truth†. “Accordingly,” he observes of these philosophers, “not a few are now passed to truth‡.” St. Jerome, in his catalogue, mentions that many of the early Christian writers preserved even their garb of philosophers. “We need not therefore foolishly stop our ears against the Greek philosophy,” concludes St. Clement, as if against syrens, “supposing that we can never return if we but hear it, for the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof; but waiting awhile and taking from it what may be useful, we should then depart home to the true philosophy§.”

St. Irenæus says, “it was necessary that truth should receive the testimony of all, that it should be a judgment of salvation to those who believed, and of condemnation to the incredulous, in order that all might be judged with justice||.” In the Gentile philosophy, therefore, he sees a testimony to the Father and to the Son before he was born of Mary. The ancient Fathers discerned in Pythagoras and Plato the philosophy of the holy Scriptures¶. Tertullian, speaking of the philosophy of Seneca, styles him, *Seneca sæpe noster* **. “Take the Greek books,” says St. Clement of Alexandria, “and read the Sibyl, and see how clearly is taught one God. Read Hystapes, and you will find the history of the Son of God predicted††.” Lactantius inserted in his work the prophecies of the Erythræan or Cumæan Sibyl, reckoning her among those who must pertain to the city of God; and

* Id. vi. 8.

† Id. v. 8.

‡ VI. 18.

§ VI. ii.

|| Adv. Hær. lib. iv. c. 14.

¶ S. Clem. Alex. Admon. ad Gentes. Tertull. Apolog. S. Cyril. Alexand. Cont. Jul. 1. Theodoret, Sermon. I. ad Græc. Euseb. lib. xi. xii. xiii. S. Ambros. in Ps. cxviii.

** De Anima, 20.

†† Stromat. vi. 6.

St. Augustin shows, that there were many Gentiles who predicted Christ *. The latter indeed proves, that what is called the Christian religion existed from the beginning of the human race †. St. Prosper says, that the ancient just were already Christians, because they lived in the faith which was to be revealed ‡; and St. Agobard says, that we believe not only all the holy patriarchs but many of the Gentiles to have been anointed with an invisible chrism, and made members of Christ §. This opinion was taught by all the ancient doctors of the church ||, and commentated upon by all the scholastic theologians ¶. Hugo of St. Victor expressly says, “ the Gentile philosophers do not seem to have attained to the knowledge of the unity and trinity of God without the assistance of grace **.” It was in consequence of discerning so much of the eternal wisdom in the works of the ancients, that the schoolmen attached so much importance to them; and it should be observed, that the Catholic philosophers of a later age, who followed in their footsteps, ascribed their affection for them to the same cause; they saw God in all things. “ I have studied the cabalistical books of the Hebrews with great labour,” says John Picus of Mirandula, “ books which the Jews will not permit any one under forty years of age to touch. I call God to witness that I have seen in them not so much the Mosaic as the Christian religion. There I have found the mystery of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Word, the divinity of the Messiah, original sin, the expiation of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of the demons, purgatory, and hell. As for the Pythagorean philosophy, hear only Plato, whose decrees are so like the Christian

* De Civ. Dei, xviii. 23, 47.

† St. August. Retract. lib. i. c. 13. n. 3.

‡ In Ps. civ.

§ S. Agobard, lib. adv. Fredegisum, 20.

|| St. Epiph. Hæres. 66. Euseb. Hist. l. c. 4. Origen in Epist. ad Rom. lib. ii. c. 3. S. Cyprian, Epist. 73. S. Hilar. de Trinitat. lib. v. S. Jerome, lib. Comen. in Epist. ad Galat. c. 2. Theodoret in Epist. ad Rom. S. Fulgence, lib. de Incarn. c. 17. S. Gregor. the Great in Ezechiel, lib. ii. hom. 17. S. Augustin, Epist. 157. ad Optat. et lib. ix. cont. Faust.

¶ Vide S. Thomas, S.S. quæst. ii. art. 7. Hugues de St. Victor, lib. i. de Sacr. part 10. c. 4. the Master of the Sentences in iii. distinct. 10. who cites others; and Suarez de Fide, disp. 11. §. 6.

** Quæst. circ. Epist. ad Rom.

faith, that our Augustin returned immense thanks to God for having placed in his hand the books of the Platonicians *.” So then, whether we consider the study of the heathen philosophy by the holy Fathers, by the schoolmen, or by the later Catholic philosophers, who sought to revive a more decided taste for that ancient literature, we find that, during ages of faith, it was always conducted in a purely Christian spirit and subserviency to the great aim of magnifying and beholding God. It has been remarked, indeed, by modern philosophers, that the main object of Charlemagne, as that of the middle ages generally, in promoting classical learning, was neither more nor less than the propagation of the Christian religion †. Accordingly we find, that there was not then that exclusive study of the ancient and modern writers in succession only and rarely, or never together, or with light reciprocally reflected; which, as a distinguished scholar complains, is all that can be found at present. Nor was the result of classical study the pedantic useless erudition of those condemned by Malebranche, who quote an infinity of authors to show what certain men believed that Aristotle believed respecting the soul’s immortality; but it was a deep and holy joy to behold the consent of all nations and the anticipated testimony of human reason to the truths announced by our Redeemer. In this manner God, being thus made visible to them in works of ancient philosophy, the rest was matter of indifference; and Richard of St. Victor, the great glory of the school, boasts that it was so, citing with enthusiasm the words of Jerome, “nor doth it matter what saith Aristotle, but what saith Paul ‡.” With respect to the relative merit of the ancient sages, they of course had their opinion. St. Augustin §, and almost all the holy Fathers, prefer Plato to the Stagyrte. St. Thomas remarks, that in many things which pertain to philosophy, Augustine uses the opinions of Plato, not affirming but reciting ||. The schoolmen, too, esteemed Plato in consideration of his piety, of his depth, and of that general conformity of his thoughts with the noblest

* De Hominum Dignitate.

† Geschichte der Class. Litterat. im Mittelalter. 127.

‡ Ric. S. Vict. Sermo in die Pasch.

§ De Civ. Dei, x. i.

|| LXXVII. art. 5.

sentiments of nature, which made a later philosopher remark, that on many points he was a Platonician before he knew there had ever been a Plato in the world. Hence that Platonic savour which so much delighted Marsilius Ficinus, in the writings of Henry of Ghent and of Duns Scotus *. St. Thomas indeed makes more use of Aristotle, but he only preferred him in his capacity of logician. For neither, however, was there, during the middle ages, that exclusive admiration and reverence with which modern historians pretend they were regarded. Melchior Canus shows on how many points Aristotle erred against the truth of the Scriptures, for he erred in his treatise on Dreams, denying that God ever sends a dream, in his Treatise on Good Fortune, where he argues against a Providence, from the visible disorder in the moral world, in his book *De Coelo*, where he would lead us to conclude that the rational soul was either obnoxious to corruption, or that it was eternal and uncreated, in the fifth and twelfth books of his *Metaphysics*, where he defines God to be a perpetual and the best animal, and again, at another time, where he calls him a mind, or the heaven itself, in the same book, where he ascribes an infinite virtue to intellectual substances, and again, when he seems to stigmatise, as fables to restrain the vulgar, and promote the utility of civil life, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and where he teaches that God disdains to occupy himself about the insignificant affairs of men †. True, as Staudenmaier observes, Catholicism would embrace and possess all things in one. This is what gives Christianity that universal character by which it is so distinguished, for true genius appears only in totality of genius. It was no accommodation of Plato and Aristotle, still less a slavish reliance on either, when the theologians of the middle age had regard to them; but it was only that love, that impulse, that spiritual necessity to view genius as one. Hence it was that they employed Aristotle to explain their scholastic points, but without suffering the old philosophy to enter into any part of the base of their structures: it is clear that the scholastics decided with freedom for themselves what views were most just, and that they did not follow

* Mars. Fic. Epist. lib. ix.

† *De Locis Theologicis*, lib. x. cap. v.

blindly the opinion of any philosopher. In general it is evident that they did not hold to any decision of Aristotle or Plato, but that they received them with various modifications, and came to adopt at length through necessity as the clear product of their own reflection a middle age philosophy. In fact we find in the scholastics the greatest originality, and the utmost riches of thought*." If we turn to the Catholic philosophers of a later age, who were most distinguished for an enthusiastic attachment to the ancient philosophy, we shall find that the study of Pagan writers had never tainted the purity or cooled the fervour of their faith. If they would say, with the Count de Maistre, "Let us never leave a great question without having first heard Plato," they do not leave us to doubt whether they concluded with the Gospel. Marsilius Ficinus, who obtained so eminently the title of Platonist, says himself, that he has only followed the example of Augustin, and other most holy men, in respecting Plato, and in delaying in the Academy, in order to show the concord of Moses and Plato, and how the Christian dogmas are confirmed by the Socratic†.

In his letter to Picus of Mirandula, he says, "that all his desire in studying the Platonic philosophy, is to make men Christians‡." All the desire of Ambrosius Traversari, in translating the work of Diogenes Laertius, is to show that the more we study the heathen philosophy, the more we must admire the Christian religion. Alas! how different from the language of the scholars of a later period, who, like Heinsius and Scaliger, reserved all their eloquence for pompous orations in praise of the Stoical philosophy§—all their zeal for reprobating "the hive of Loiolites,"—all their enthusiasm for admiring Casaubon's divine castigations on Athenæus! "Tuæ divinæ in Athenæum castigationes adeo me rapiunt," says the latter, "ut quam in illas incidi, ægre me ab illis revocari patiar." "There is no writer who has taught me so many or such great things as you in that divine work||."

Indeed, the scholars of this reformed school seemed to avow that the state of things around them, which they

* Johan. Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. l. 444.

† Epist. lib. vii. & viii.

‡ Id. lib. xi.

§ Heinsii Orat. xxiv.

|| Jos. Scal. Epist. lib. i. 58, 59.

so greatly admired, was only a return to that of the heathen world. "In the writers even of the eighth century," says one of these, "we meet with a reminiscence of the ancient philosophy, which seems an anticipation of our modern humanity. Eginhard thinks and speaks like the most virtuous man of an enlightened age: by studying the monuments of the fine Roman civilization, he had divined our own*." What would that poor Ratherius, in the tenth century, who was counted, we are told, as the first amongst the Palatine philosophers, have thought of such a criterion to judge of the progress of philosophy?

What would he have thought on hearing men affirm with Heeren, that the study of heathen literature might contribute to a salutary reform of the Church, and after sixteen centuries, place theology for the first time on its true basis†, or with an English author of genius, that they lamented the ancient idolatry! "I visited the Pantheon," says a modern traveller, "and entered with a reverence approaching to superstition. I closed my eyes, and tried to persuade myself the Pagan gods were in their niches, and the saints out of the question; I was vexed at coming to my senses and finding them all there—St. Andrew with his cross, and St. Agnes with her lamb; then I paced disconsolately into the portico." Where could a parallel be found to such a passage throughout the whole literature of sixteen centuries? Certainly, it is not from Catholic scholars that a descent can be traced by these men, who, with the same breath, attempt to prove the heathenism of the ancient Catholic state, and to complete their consistency, perhaps, are building heathen temples, as in Hanover, and placing upon them such an inscription as that which may be found there, "*Genio Leibnitzii*." The Catholic church would never lend her sanction, though only by silence, to such a spirit. She sent her scholars to behold God in the ancient monuments of human genius, but not to rebuild Paganism with their ruins.

Marsilius Ficinus acknowledges, indeed, with gratitude, that if the books of Plato had not caused him to fall into some heresy, he owed his escape to the care of St. Antoninus, archbishop of Florence, for the vigilant pastor

* Villemain, *Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age*, i.

† *Gesch. d. Class. Lit. im Mittelalt.* ii. 350.

seeing the incredible ardour of the young canon for the works of this philosopher, feared that the beauty of the language might lead him astray, and therefore engaged him to suspend that reading until he had first studied the four books of St. Thomas against the Gentiles. The sermons of Savonarola, at which he was an assiduous assistant, completed the extirpation of any latent pride resulting from his love of the Platonic writings, which was contrary to the resolve of glorying alone in being a Christian *. The necessity for caution, indeed, was well observed all through the ages of faith.

Hence, Francis Picus of Mirandula remarks, that all Christians ought not to consult the books of the Gentiles, "for some," he says, "are so imbecile and infirm, that when they find them contradicting faith, they will hesitate; and others who guide souls to the heavenly Jerusalem cannot find time to study them †." But when minds were truly enlightened, to glory in such studies was the same as to glory in the Cross. Some condemned his illustrious uncle John Picus of Mirandula for his assiduous study of the ancients, objecting to all philosophy, on the ground that Adam, on account of science, was ejected from Paradise, and that it is extirpated by the example of Christ. But how magnificent was the reply of that admirable young man, the pride and ornament of his age, whose name the greatest of his contemporaries pronounced with an enthusiasm, which, perhaps, was never paralleled. "Let them permit me, who am a Christian born, of Christian parents, who bear the sign of Christ on my forehead, to exclaim with Paul, I am not a Jew, not an Ishmaelite, not a heretic; but I worship Jesus Christ, and I bear the cross of Jesus in my body, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I to the world ‡."

"I found in my late sickness," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Francis Marescalcho of Ferrara, "that human writings confer nearly nothing, and that the works of Christ console more than the words of all the philosophers." To a similar conclusion we find many coming in the middle ages, who, like Hugo Metellus, writing to St. Bernard, took a pride in styling themselves "the

* Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 23.

† De Studio Divin. et Hum. Philos. lib. i. c. 5. ‡ Apologia.

late domestics of Aristotle, now the servants of Christ." Truly in these illustrious lovers of wisdom, was seen verified, the prediction of the holy Fathers and the schoolmen, that to the pure all things are pure, and that even the philosophy of the Gentiles can reveal God. Francis of Mirandula says, "that his uncle John Picus had such an ardent love for God, that once when they were walking together in a certain orchard at Ferrara, talking on the love of Christ," he said to him in conclusion, "I will disclose a secret which is for your ear alone. As soon as I shall have finished my lucubrations, I am resolved to give all that I possess to the poor, and armed with a crucifix barefooted I will go through towns and cities and castles preaching Christ." "I heard afterwards," adds the nephew, "that he had resolved on entering the order of St. Dominick *." The great and learned men, who in ages of faith had Plato and Aristotle on their tongues, had no less Christ enshrined within their hearts, to receive adoration there, and undivided love and glory. The Catholic scholars of the sixteenth century united the graces of the ancient literature with the simplicity and piety of the Christian. Like Picus of Mirandula, they might be heard saying, a cock to Æsculapius the physician, at our death, which is the true recovery †, shewing how well they had understood Plato, without leading any one to suspect that they did not die as monks or hermits die.

Hermolaus Barbarus describes the last moments of Zachariah, the legate at Venice, as follows:—"Such was his constancy that he did not once indicate the least possible sign of grief, so intrepid that he seemed about to move not from life, but only from one house to another. During three days continually he spoke or heard others speak of God, of religion, of the immortality of the soul. The extreme sacraments he not only did not defer receiving, but of his own accord he demanded them. All the senses of his mind and body, in which few men surpassed him, he preserved to the last. Nay, at the last he shewed himself more subtle than he ever did before. He had two little images, one of Christ, and the other of the blessed Virgin, which he kept pressed to his breast, and he expired kissing them. It is inexpressible the consolation derived from witnessing such a kind—do not say

* Vita ejus.

† De Hominum Dignitate.

of death, but of glorious resurrection to a better life." But we must proceed to consider the other studies which imparted a vision of God to the clean of heart.

CHAPTER XV.

THE holy Scriptures, in ages when they were understood as the church interprets them, and in ages when it was thought that every reader might interpret them according to his own judgment, have exercised a very different influence upon the human character, and led to results of a very dissimilar nature in the history of mankind. At the effects caused by their diffusion during the latter period we can but occasionally glance, since they do not form part of the subject of this history. On others may devolve the task of surveying wars and disputations, and murders, which were deemed acceptable to heaven, and men who sought and found themselves in the inspired books. Our path leads us to survey the beauty of a peaceful Paradise, the order and wisdom of a celestial world, and the felicity of men, who in the Scriptures, as in the book of nature, and as in the primeval records of the world, sought and beheld God. Jesus Christ wrote nothing, and it does not appear in what is written that he gave orders to his Apostles to write. There was no ground from earlier revelations to suppose that the divine light preparing for the world was to be diffused by writing; for, on the contrary, God had said by the mouth of Jeremiah, "I will write my law in their souls, and I will engrave it in their hearts." "Hence," the holy Fathers say, "that the church might have dispensed with Scripture, if Christians had remained in charity and truth." "Thus," St. Chrysostom says, "our life ought to be so pure, that we should have no need of the assistance of holy Scripture, and grace alone serving us in place of all books, the law of God would be written in our heart, not with ink, but by the impression of the Holy Spirit. God has sufficiently shewn us by what he

has said and done, how much more happy this first state would have been than the latter. For, he spoke to Noah, to Abraham, and to his descendants, to Job, and to Moses, not by characters and letters, but immediately by himself. In the New Testament God has retraced the conduct which he had observed in the Old, and treated the Apostles as he had treated the Patriarchs. Jesus Christ has left them nothing in writing, but instead of books, the grace of the Holy Spirit. "A man, therefore," says St. Augustin, "supported by faith, hope, and charity, and retaining them unimpaired, has no need of the Scriptures, unless in order to instruct others*." Experience proves this, for St. Irenæus testifies, that many lived by these three in solitude, without books. "Whence," he adds, "I think is fulfilled in them what is said, *sive prophetiæ evacuabuntur, sive linguæ cessabunt, sive scientia destruetur.*" In the symbols of the Apostles and of Nice, after the words *Spiritus Sanctum* follows immediately the holy Catholic Church, without any mention of the Scriptures, since men were not to believe in the Church, from believing in them, as modern philosophers suppose, but, as St. Augustin says, "to believe the Scriptures, because the Church presented them."

Paul the Apostle in many places of his letters, says, that "the Church is the body of Christ, and Christ the head of the Church." "Therefore," continues Louis of Blois, "he who rebels against the Church, rebels against Christ. *Si contemnitur Ecclesia, contemnitur et Christus.*" There is but one voice of the body and head; and the precepts of the Church are the precepts of Christ, although not expressed in the sacred Scriptures: for the authority of the Church does not depend upon the testimony of the Scriptures, but rather the authority of the Scriptures depends upon the approbation of the Church; for who would know that the Scriptures which we venerate were divine, unless the Church received them? The holy Gospels, the Epistles, and Acts of the Apostles, were written many years after the ascension of Christ into heaven. Had the Church then no authority of making statutes, because what she might ordain was not expressed in the Scriptures? Were not men bound to

* De Doct. Christ. lib. i. c. 39.

believe and obey the Church, then teaching without the Scriptures of the New Testament * ?

Such continued to be the convictions of men, and such predictions continued to be verified during sixteen centuries. "The simpler sort of people," says Louis of Blois, "who are men of goodwill, fulfil the law ; that is, they love God and their neighbour, although they may not read those divine Scriptures, many places of which are difficult to be understood †." Nevertheless, the abuse of sacred Scripture began in very early times, so that St. Augustine recapitulates the accumulated evidence of preceding ages, saying, "heresy springs from no other source but from good Scripture ill-understood and boldly maintained ‡." Tertullian had concluded his great work against heresy with these words, "thus have we brought to an end the question between us and heretics of every description, by certain just and necessary prescriptions, drawing them away from that collation of the Scriptures to which they invite us. "With discussions from Scripture," he says elsewhere, "they fatigue the firm, capture the weak, and leave those that are between with scruples §." Not to consult Scripture, therefore, are men to be challenged, nor is the combat to be in them, where there is to be no victory, or a very uncertain victory, or what amounts to the same. Nor do I fear to say, that the Scriptures themselves are so disposed by the will of God, that they should minister materials to heretics, since I read that heresies must of necessity come, which, without the Scriptures, could not be ||.

In fact, when the heretics refer us to the Scriptures, we can answer, what need to refer to Scripture, since, without its assistance, we can prove to God that you have no right to the Scripture ? The Church may say to them, who are you ? Whence did you come ? Thou Marcus, what right have you to work a mine which belongs to me ? "I had a source whose waters were of the greatest beauty : " say Valentin, "who has given you leave to come and trouble it ? All this is my inheritance ; you are strangers, why do you pretend to sow my land, and to feed your flocks upon my pastures ? It is my heritage—

* Ludovic. Blosius Epist. ad Florentium.

† Ludov. Blos. Collyr. Hæreticorum, lib. i. c. 3.

‡ Tract. in Joan. xviii. § Ap. xv. || De Præscript.

I possess it since a long time—I possessed it before you—I have the titles which have been transmitted to me, by those to whom it belonged. I am the heir of the Apostles—I hold it conformably to their testament—I execute what they have committed to my faith: nothing shall make me depart from this rule of conduct; but as for you, they have disinherited you; they have rejected you as strangers and as enemies*.”

The gnostic heretics, by whom such a flood of fantastic errors was let loose in the first ages, were of all men of that period the most assiduous readers of Scripture, and the most laborious in quest of texts to suit their purposes. And, if we pursued history farther, we should find that at no epoch were there wanting men to fabricate arms of iniquity from the words of truth—a fact remarked even by poets, saying,

“ ————— In religion

What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?”

The holy Scriptures, as we shall soon observe more fully, were regarded in ages of faith as that tower of David spoken of in the book of Canticles, hung round with shields for all who combated in the cause of God and his Church. “*Sicut turris David—mille clypei pendentes ex ea, omnis armatura fortium†.*” But though intended for all, it was known that there might be times and circumstances when the pastors of the Church would find it for the good of men’s souls, to supply them with the word of God exclusively, in the way of preaching, and of spiritual books of instruction. The Fathers, who have so forcibly recommended the reading of the Scriptures, did not deem it right to put all its books indifferently into the hands of the faithful. St. Basil, in his letter to Chilon his disciple, warns him against the danger of reading the Old Testament amiss. “Do not neglect reading,” he says, “principally that of the New Testament; that of the Old may sometimes have inconveniency. I do not mean to say that the things written in it are not good, but they may cause trouble in the mind,

* Tertullian de Præscript. xxxvii.

† Cant. 4.

and wound it in consequence of the weakness of those who allow themselves to be wounded. Bread is proper for nourishment, yet it is hurtful to the sick *."

"St. Jerome would not allow the Book of Canticles to be read till a mature period of life," and he says elsewhere, "that the beginning and the conclusion of the prophecy of Ezechiel were so obscure that the Jews used to forbid their being read by all under thirty years of age, and that they extended the same prohibition to the commencement of Genesis†." If we read St. Jerome's fiftieth Epistle to Paulinus, we shall find how that holy and learned man esteemed the study of the Scripture deep and difficult, and requiring a surer guide than merely a good intention. The mystic and scholastic theologians of the middle age were impressed with the same conviction. The profound and multitudinous knowledge which is required for a thorough understanding of the holy Scriptures, is shown with great judgment by Raban Maur‡. And, in fact, all sciences and arts were then chiefly cultivated, with a view to elucidate them. Honorius of Autun, in his encyclopædical work, *De Animæ Exilio et Patria*, represents the soul as a pilgrim—wandering in exile, that is, in ignorance, through ten different states, which are the sciences of the trivium and quadrivium, physics, mechanics, and æconomics, to its true country, which is the holy Scripture.

Richard of St. Victor remarks that, "the Scripture often says one thing and means another§." "Many places of Scripture," saith he, "have a vain and perverse sound in relation to history, which yet discussed mystically, speak what is right according to spiritual intelligence||." St. Augustin had said, "that it is with the prophetic books as with harps, in which not all parts give sound, but only the cords¶." Thomas Haselbach, of Vienna, spent twenty-two years in explaining the first chapter of Isaiah, as Cæneas Sylvius relates**. Yet, erudition was far from being considered as the most im-

* S. Basil, Letter to Chilon, his disciple.

† S. Hieron. lib. ii. Ep. 1. ad Paulinum Presbyterum.

‡ Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, lib. iii. c. 8.

§ De Eruditione Hom. Inter. P. i. lib. i. || Id. 1. lib. ii. 9.

¶ De Civ. Dei, xvi.

** Epist. lib. i. 165.

portant qualification. "A learned exposition of the holy Scriptures," as Frederick Schlegel observes, "most certainly requires and presupposes a philosophic spirit, but it is not itself philosophy *," still less was it considered synonymous with religion. According to Catholic theologians, simple reasonings upon texts of the Bible, however solid, do never constitute the faith of any doctrine. In early times many knew the Scriptures by heart, without being considered as having made a greater proficiency in truth. "There are some," says St. Augustin, "who read them, and neglect them; they read that they may retain them; they neglect lest they should understand: to whom are to be preferred greatly, without doubt, those who retain the words less, and see their substance with the eyes of their heart †." "In later ages," Frederick Schlegel remarks, "that the study of the Bible has not prevented the northern Germans from adopting the system of rationalism," founded upon the idea of the Bible itself being also progressive, and certainly never has it been proved to conduce of necessity to the nourishment of the interior life. This result of experience explains many things.

When a certain young person came to offer herself to be received into one of St. Theresa's convents, and said that she must have permission to bring her Bible with her, we read that this holy mother and truly profound lover of wisdom, who in a pure heart was blessed with so clear a view of God on earth, replied immediately, "O, then you are not for us! We are poor ignorant sisters, who can only spin and sew. You would do much better to go elsewhere with your Bible." It is evident that the saint perceived, by her manner, that she was vain and fond of disputation. Not by such persons did the inhabitants of cloisters, in the middle ages, require to be taught reverence for the Scriptures. We read, in the annals of the Minors, that it was remarked by the senior monks of the monastery of St. Mary of the Angels at Florence, that brother Silvester, when the gospel was read, used to change his place and fall into the rear, in order to prevent any one from

* Philosophie der Sprache, 249.

† De Doct. Christ. lib. iv. c. 5.

observing his tears and rapture at hearing the divine word*.

Undoubtedly, the believing men of yore were far from recommending the study of the Bible, exclusive and unconnected with other discipline, as a sole sufficient way of spiritual progress. "O how glorious is it," exclaims Alanus de Insulis, "to read, how fruitful is it to study, with intense fervour, the Scriptures—to inquire into the mind of God, to investigate his instructions! but every one ought to read in a triple book—in his book of creatures, that he may find God, in the book of conscience, that he may know himself, and in the book of Scripture, that he may love his neighbour†."

Another indispensable obligation of the pastors of the church, relative to the study of the holy Scriptures, was to prevent the possibility of the people being deceived and led into error by means of false or unworthy translations of the sacred text. In transcribing the Scriptures, the Jews are so careful, that if any copy should be found deficient in a single letter, or with a single letter too much, or with a fault in one letter, it is burnt or otherwise destroyed: and was the church to be condemned for regarding with execration wilful alterations of the text, in order to establish certain opinions by means of them? From time to time new versions of the Scripture were proposed by men like Berenger, of whom Guitmundus says that he chose rather under the admiration of men to be a heretic, than to live a Catholic without exciting notice under the eyes of God. Against these simply to relate the conduct and language of the church, is to refute the accusations of her adversaries. Pope Innocent III., after mentioning that certain societies of men and women in the diocese of Metz had lately translated into French the gospels and epistles of St. Paul, as well as other books of holy Scripture, and adding that he wishes they had done so prudently as well as readily, concludes in these terms:—"But, although the desire of understanding the divine Scriptures, and the study of exhortation according to them, so far from being a subject for censure, is deserving of praise, yet they appear to merit being reproved on this account—

* Wad. Annal. Min. tom. v. lib. xlviii.

† Alani de Ins. Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 36.

that being persons of such a description, they celebrate their occult conventicles, usurp to themselves the office of preaching, elude the simplicity of the priests, and despise the society of all those who do not adhere to themselves." To the bishop and chapter of Metz he writes, therefore, saying, "Be solicitous to investigate who was really the author of this translation, what was the intention of the translator, what is the faith of those who use it, what is the cause of their teaching, whether they venerate the apostolic see and the Catholic church, in order that we may be able to understand better what to determine *."

When we read that the holy Gregory VII., in the eleventh century, forbade the King of Bohemia to make a translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue of that country, through fear lest the sacred truths should be exposed to rash interpretations—or when we observe the distrust of the Gallican church, in the sixteenth century, with respect to new versions and the use of them by the people †,—we must refer, for a solution of the difficulty, to the circumstances which made such caution necessary ; which cannot be known at present without studying the literary and religious history of the country at the time—an inquiry which Protestants need not disdain to institute, for their own writers have repeatedly acknowledged the danger. "Considering with myself," says Fuller, "the causes of the growth and increase of impiety and profaneness in our land, amongst others this seemeth to me not the least, viz., the late many false and erroneous impressions of the Bible;" to the rash study of which Hey, another of their divines, attributed the civil wars.

That just and accurate versions of the Holy Scripture were studiously withheld from the people in the middle ages, is a modern error which has been so often exposed, and which, indeed, is so utterly irreconcilable with all the historical facts produced in the course of these books, that any consideration of it here would be superfluous. In proportion as the modern languages began to supersede the Latin, we find the zeal of holy men directed to the end of supplying versions of the Scripture. It was

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. ii. 141, 142.

† Berthier, Discours sur l'Ecrit. Sainte, Hist. tom. xviii.

Hedwige, the saintly young queen of Poland, an assiduous reader of the Scriptures, so devoted to the propagation of the Catholic faith that she consented to marry one most odious to her, when assured that such an alliance would greatly promote it, who caused to be made, in 1390, the first translation of the Scriptures into the Polish tongue. It was James de Voragine, archbishop of Genoa in the thirteenth century, compiler of the golden legend, who translated the whole Bible into Italian*. Again, in 1471, it is Nicolas Malermius, a Camaldolese monk of St. Matthias de Muriano at Venice, who gives a new literal translation of the whole Bible into the vulgar Italian, under the title of *Biblia Volgare Historiata*†. The old French versions, by Guiars des Moulins, Raoul de Presles, and others, were in every library‡; and the whole Bible was translated into French in the reign of King Charles V.; and long before the invention of printing, versions of it were given in most of the European languages. Before the Lutheran revolution, several editions had been printed in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, and Bohemia. Although many German translations from the Vulgate had before been printed, yet in 1534 we find the project of a new edition by Luther so favourably received by the Catholics, that he said on one occasion, “Our adversaries read the Bible translated more than our people. I believe that Duke George has read it with more care than all the nobility that holds to our side. He said to some one, ‘Provided this monk finish the translation of the Bible, he may depart hence when he pleases. I read the Bible much in my youth, while I was a monk §.’” Hurter remarks the absurdity of those modern writers who repeat one after another that even the clergy were not familiar with the Bible||. The resolute assertions, in this respect, of Calvin¶, of Robert and Henry Ste-

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i. lib. 6.

† *Annal. Camaldul.* lib. lxvi.

‡ Berthier, *Discours sur l'Ecriture Sainte Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. xviii.

§ Michelet, *Mém. de Luther*, tom. iii. 90.

|| *Geschichte Inn.* III. book xiii. p. 246.

¶ In Luc. et in Antidot. Concil. Trid.

phens *, and of Jurieu †, constitute, certainly, an important fact to enable us to determine the credit due to such witnesses in general.

Of the labours bestowed by learned men, during ages of faith, upon studies that had for object the explanation of the sacred text, I can hardly hope to give a faint idea. I can but recall such names as Menochius, Cajetanus, Estius, Cornelius à Lapide, Calmet, De Sacy. Great commentators had preceded these: such as that profound theologian and admirable historian, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the English Dominican Nicolas Trevet, whose father was one of the chief ministers of Henry III.; and Pierre de la Pala, of whom Sixtus of Sienna says that he read a part of his vast comment on the Scriptures in the library of the Dominicans at Lyons, and that his comment on the Psalter alone filled seven volumes ‡.

To these men the moderns are indebted for many things which tend to facilitate and diffuse a knowledge of the holy Scriptures. It was Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, so deeply versed in them, who first divided the sacred books into chapters, as they are at present §. How admirable are the comments of Albert the Great upon the Psalms! What profound views respecting the interpretations of all Scripture are furnished by the work of Hugo of St. Victor, entitled *Eruditionis Didascalice* ||! How his great disciple, Richard, in his explication of some difficult passages of the apostle, casts a penetrating glance through the abyss of the Scriptures! Yet with what humility do these guides offer their assistance! “Since the divine Scripture can be variously expounded, no one,” says St. Thomas, citing St. Augustin, “should so precisely adhere to any one exposition as to persist in maintaining it to be the sense of Scripture, if it can be shown by certain reason to involve an error ¶.” Many things, indeed, were to be

* Pref. de sa Réponse aux Doct. de Paris: and Apolog. d’Herodot.

† Apol. pour les Réform. t. i. 145.

‡ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l’Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. lib. 9. 11.

§ Hurter, Geschichte Inn. III. ii. 59.

|| Lib. v. vi.

¶ P. i. q. lxviii. art. 1.

held which are not found in Scripture ; but, as St. Bonaventura says, “ True faith does not sound at discord with Scripture, but it agrees with it, with an assent not feigned *.”

The rules of interpretation followed through the middle ages, which may be found in Mabillon’s work on monastic study, were those of the early Fathers. They guided men, with St. Augustin, to see the New Testament concealed in the Old, and the Old manifested in the New—to understand all that is contained in the former, as written either of Jesus Christ or for Jesus Christ †, and to believe that, wherever the Scripture seems to order a crime or to forbid a beneficent or useful action, it is figured ‡. They preserved men from all gross conceptions of religious truth. “ We read that God is angry, and that he repents ; but I am indignant,” continues Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remy, “ to think that any ecclesiastic should be so ignorant as not to know that in all such passages the authority of the Scripture only speaks after our manner, and uses figures accommodated to our expressions §.”

The importance attached to such erudition may be estimated from observing that the highest glory was to be gained by those who cultivated it. Thus St. Boniface, writing from Germany to Archbishop Eckbert in England, to request that he would send him some of the treatises lately written by the great luminary of the British church, Bede, styles him that spiritual priest and investigator of the holy Scriptures ||. Similarly, John Scot Erigena, passing over all their other acquirements, says, that besides the holy apostles, there is no one with the Greeks of greater authority in exposition of the holy Scripture than Gregory the theologian ; no one with the Romans than Aurelius Augustin ¶. This was, in effect, the highest praise that could be thought of ; for Raban Maur says that the science of the holy Scriptures is the foundation and perfection of that wisdom which should

* S. Bonavent. Breviloquii, Pars v. cap. vii.

† Le P. Lamy, *Introduct. à l’Ecrit.*

‡ S. August. de Doct. Christ. lib. iii. 16.

§ Epist. lib. ix. 9. || S. Bonif. Epist. ixxxv.

¶ De Divis. Nat. iv. 14.

belong to clerks *. To transcribe them had always been a darling occupation of holy men. St. Bonaventura, who knew by heart both the Old and New Testaments, with his own hand wrote two copies of the whole Bible, which Wadding says are still extant †. The beautiful manuscript of the Gothic translation of the gospels, by Ulphilas, in the fourth century, is in the library of Upsal. The Bible written by Alcuin, and given by him to Charlemagne, contains a multitude of exquisite miniatures. Charles the Bald, who conferred inestimable benefits upon men by his love for science and learning, among other books collected many of these Bibles, which can be still met with in France, Italy, and Germany. He caused a superb copy of the gospels to be written out for the abbey of St. Denis, in letters of gold, which was afterwards given by the emperor Arnulf to the abbot St. Emmeron at Regensburg. A similar copy he had made for the abbey of Fleuri: he set such a value on the manuscripts which he had collected with such pains and cost, that before his second journey to Italy he made an ordinance that in case of his death his rich library should be divided into three parts, one of which was to be given to his son the prince, another to the abbey of St. Denis, and the third to that of Compiègne.

Bibles were a common donation in the middle ages; and it is curious to remark how steadily the eyes of the donors were directed to God, even in the act of giving or bequeathing them. Thus it is to St. Cuthbert that William de Carileph, bishop of Durham in the eleventh century, leaves his books, the list of which begins with the Bible in two volumes, as may be seen in the mortuary of that prelate, who built the cathedral. The monastic records are full of such donations. Thus a seigneur, called Peter de Lagny, presents the abbey of St. Geneviève with a canton covered with vines, and also with a Bible ‡. In the Necrology of the same abbey it is recorded, in the twelfth century, that Master Matthew de Savigny gave the monks a very beautiful Bible and a gold ring §. The word *bibliotheca* often signified a

* Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, lib. iii. cap. 2.

† Annal. Minorum, tom. iii.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. vi. § Id. tom. xii.

Bible. Thus Suger, abbot of St. Denis, in founding the priory of Essone, gave to the church sacerdotal vestments, curtains of silk, two texts, the gradual of the Emperor Charles, and also bibliotheca in two volumes, which was a Bible *.

We have already seen many incidental testimonies to the diffusion of a love for biblical study even among the laity of the middle ages; and they who desire further proof may refer to the discourse of Berthier on the sentiments of the church with respect to the use of the holy Scriptures. Theganus says that the Emperor Louis the Pious knew admirably the sense of all the Scriptures, both the spiritual and moral, and also anagogical sense †. Writing in the thirteenth century, Vincent of Beauvais says, "In our times, according to the prophecy of Daniel, I behold multiplied every where the knowledge not alone of secular letters, but also of the divine Scriptures, and all men, especially our brethren, assiduously employed in giving historical and mystical expositions of the sacred books, and in solving their more obscure questions ‡." The familiarity of the French people with the holy Scriptures could, indeed, be inferred merely from remarking their old popular sayings and forms of expression, which are conceived from so subtle an observation of Scripture that even biblical scholars might require time for reflection before they could feel their force. Luther, while a monk studying the Bible in the cloisters of Erfurt, came to the conclusion that the sins of the world around him arose from a want of the knowledge of the Scriptures. He burnt with desire to translate them; he never considered that there had been already sixteen versions in his native tongue;—well, at all events, beyond a doubt he was more eloquent than others before him. So he rushed forth, and fared as all men know: but what is worthy of remark is, the fact that in his latter years he recognized his error in having thought that all which was wanting to make men perfect was a greater distribution of Bibles. "Why should new heresies arise," saith he, "when the world has an epicurean contempt for the word of God? It is satiated with it."

* Id. tom. xi.

† De Gestis Ludovic. Pii, c. 19.

‡ Vin. Bellov. Prolog. cap. 11.

Having seen the caution and judgment, the learning and ability, which men in ages of faith brought with them to the study of the holy Scriptures, it only remains to show briefly with what earnest and pathetic tenderness they encouraged one another to pursue it. Let us hear St. Bonaventura:—"Among other virtues of the most holy virgin Cecilia, it is said that she always carried the gospel of Christ in her breast, which is to be understood as implying that she always meditated on the life of our Lord. This, of all spiritual exercises, is the most necessary; for it is by studying the life of our Lord Jesus that you will be instructed and strengthened to conduct your course. Hence it is that many illiterate men have been profoundly instructed in the mysteries of God. How do you suppose that the blessed Francis was able to arrive at such an excellence of virtue and of wisdom in understanding the holy Scriptures, unless by means of a familiar conversation and meditation with his Lord Jesus? Hence he ardently studied him, as if he would make his picture; and so affectionately did he seek to imitate him, that he was, as it were, transformed into him*." "I wish you were to know the New Testament by heart," says Father John de Avilla, in answer to one who wrote to consult him†. This study was the soul of the religious state. The father abbot of La Trappe, speaking of Dom Bazile in that austere community, says that his books were the lives of the holy Fathers of the desert, the conferences of Cassien, the works of St. Ephrem, of St. John Climachus, the Ascetics of St. Basil, but, above all, the holy Scriptures, which were his constant food‡. "The holy Scriptures are a garden," says St. Chrysostom, "full of the sweetest flowers—a paradise always refreshed with gentle winds and the most delightful air." "They who use them rightly," says St. Aldhelm, bishop of Sherburn, "are like bees who disperse themselves on the wings of the morning through a garden of flowers: at one time feasting on the honied leaf of the balmy shrub, at another drinking nectar in the purple pavilion of the flower; so does the devout mind, through the odorife-

* *Meditationes Vitæ Christæ*, Proem.

† *Epist.* lxxii.

‡ *Rélations de la Mort de quelques Rel. de l'Ab. de la Trappe*, l.

rous meadow of the Scriptures, fly from one beautiful object to another, and saturate itself everywhere with sweetness *."

"When the mind is dissipated," says St. Theresa, "we must have recourse to books in order to fix it; and I confess that the words of the Gospel are more sure to inspire me with attention than the most learned and eloquent works."—"As for me," says Petrus Cellensis, Abbot of St. Remi, "I should think myself sufficiently rich in having the science of the Scriptures†." So imbued are the familiar epistles of holy men, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, with the learning of the holy Scriptures, that if the Bible had not been transmitted to us in its present form, we might collect from them the whole of its contents, as far as related to history, doctrine, and instruction of manners. The sublime and affecting manner in which the divine words of our Lord and of his apostles are introduced, as may be witnessed in the letters of Bede, St. Boniface, St. Bernard, Peter the Abbot of Cluny, and a multitude of others, shows that their inmost nature had become assimilated to that heavenly food. Their precepts also were express. "Be sedulous in studying the holy Scriptures," says Winfred, in his letter to Nidhard: "quid enim, frater Christiane, à juvenibus decentius quæritur, aut quid à senibus demum sobrius possidetur quam scientia Scripturarum sacram†." St. Gregory of Tours says, that he remembers when he was a child, during the sickness of his father, having a vision one night of a person, who asked him whether he was well acquainted with a certain book of the holy Scriptures, and charged him to learn it§. With the practice and precepts of holy monks and hermits the wisdom of the scholastic philosophers coincided. "All truth to me is suspicious," says Richard of St. Victor, "which the authority of Scriptures doth not confirm; nor do I receive Christ in his transfiguration, if Moses and Elias be not present with him||." "Do not in the word of God despise humility," says Hugo of St. Victor,

* Aldhelm de Laud. Virginitat. cap. 2.

† Pet. Cellens. Epist. lib. iv. 2.

‡ S. Bonif. Mart. et Archiep. Epist. 1.

§ S. Greg. Tur. De Gloria Confess. 42.

|| De Præparatione Animi ad Contemplat. c. 81.

“ for by humility you are illuminated to divinity. All this seems to you like mud, and therefore perhaps you trample it under your feet. But hear this, ‘ with that mud the eyes of the blind are opened to see *.’ ” Tournon observes, that St. Thomas derived his wisdom in great part from his profound meditation on the holy Scriptures, of which he would say with Jerome, *Oro te inter hæc vivere, ista meditari, nihil aliud nosse, nihil quærere.* “ God is witness,” says Savonarola, “ how often while I have been preaching to the people, when I have wandered into the subtle doctrine of philosophers with words of human wisdom, that I might show the depth of the sacred word to inflated minds, or to the sciolists of this world, I have perceived, from a certain impatience of my auditors, that I was less attended to not only by rude but by skilful ears ; but as often as I have returned to the majestic language of the sacred page, I could discern that I excited a wondrous attention, and that all eyes were fixed upon me as if I were beheld by marble statues †. Truly we see daily that not alone the crowd of the religious, but also that numbers of the most learned and scientific men, after they have once tasted the fountain of the holy Scriptures, leave all other sciences as insipid in comparison, and thenceforth reserve themselves wholly for that study. I know at this time many who have done so ‡.” “ As the holy Scripture,” says Duns Scotus, “ is a certain knowledge divinely given to direct men to a supernatural end, the things that are necessary to salvation are expressly in Scripture, if obscurely in one place, clearly in another ; but it is not necessary that other things, which are not necessary to salvation, should be there expressly delivered §.” The whole school, therefore, seems to speak on this head with the tongue of Dante :—

“ —Be ye more staid,
O Christians ! not like feathers, by each wind
Removeable. Either Testament,
The Old and New, is yours ; and for your guide,
The Shepherd of the Church : let this suffice
To save you ||.”

* Prænott. c. 5.

† Triump. Crucis, lib. 11. 8.

‡ Id. 11. 15.

§ Duns Scoti Miscel. 9. vi.

|| Parad. v.

If we turn to the eminent laymen in the middle ages, who applied to philosophic studies under the inspiration of faith, we find them all possessed of the same conviction, and writing in agreement with the holy school. Thus Antonio Galateus, the celebrated philosopher and physician, writing to his friend Summonti, says, "I wish if you are about to read my writings, that you would first consult the sacred Scriptures, which are the fountain of salvation, and the law of good and happy life. Then apply to the Platonic and Aristotelian dogmas, and afterwards exert all your strength in attacking your Galateus *." John Picus of Mirandula, expressing his admiration for the holy Scriptures, remarks how, on every ground, they are superior to all the philosophic writings of the Gentiles. Amelius, saith he, the disciple of Plotinus, though an enemy of the Christian religion, yet evidently quotes John the Evangelist; for he says, "And this was that Word by which the things that were made were made." Thus he, an enemy, approves of the sentence, and accepts the faith of him whom he calls a barbarian. Lately, after reading the Tusculans of Cicero, I took up Isaiah the prophet. What comparison between the eloquence even of Æschines or Demosthenes, or of any other orator of Greece, and these words of Isaiah. Audite cœli auribus, percipe terra, quoniam Dominus locutus est: Filios enutrivit—and what follows? "Heaven forbid," exclaims John Francis Picus, his illustrious nephew, writing to Paul Sancinus, "that I should abandon the frequent reading of the holy Scriptures through ardour for the study of Aristotle. For those studies are, in the first place, to be pursued, which infuse the love of God into our hearts; but after them, in second place, those which illuminate the intelligence; for as long as we are in this life, surrounded with this frail flesh, we stand more in need of perfection in the will than in the intelligence †."

But we cannot remain any longer to have such testimonies multiplied. Is any thing further required to fulfil our object, and show that the blessed clean of heart saw God in the holy Scriptures? Then it must be some words from a seraphic page. "Take up the book to

* Ant. Galatei Callipolis Descriptio in Thes. Antiq. Italiæ, tom. ix.

† F. Pic. Mir. Epist. lib. ii.

read in it," says Thomas à Kempis, "in the same manner as the just Simeon took up the child Jesus in his arms; and when you have finished reading close the book, and return thanks for every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, because you have found in the Lord's land a hidden treasure*." "The holy Scripture," says the Abbot Ælred, of Rievaulx, "is a field like that into which holy Isaac went at eventide to meditate, when Rebecca met him, and assuaged his sorrow. Good Jesus! how often do my days decline to evening when grief visits me like the shades of night; when all things that I behold seem flat and insipid and miserable. What then? I go out to meditate in the fields, I revolve the sacred pages, I meet Rebecca: that is, thy grace, O sweet Jesus, dispels my darkness, and turns my tears into celestial joy†."

I think no more is wanting. But the clean of heart now, from this time forward, become encompassed with such radiance, that mine eyes can hardly follow them:

"————— O trinal beam
Of individual star, that charm'st them thus!
Vouchsafe one glance to gild our storm below ‡."

CHAPTER XVI.

"MAN is created for this end," says St. Augustin, "that he should understand God; understanding, that he should love him; loving, possess; and possessing, enjoy him for ever." Such was the conclusion of the school respecting this great question, on which the philosophers of old had delivered such various judgments. In ages of faith, the chief good was known, the last end of all things was known, and virtue itself derived its value from this knowledge. "We do not enjoy virtues," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but we make use of them; for although they are of themselves to be loved and desired, yet not on account of themselves only, but on account of God

* Thom. à Kemp. *Doctrinale Juvenum*, cap. v.

† Ælred. in c. 15.

‡ Dante, *Parad.* xxxi.

finally, do the saints in hope, and sometimes in deed, reap them. We use virtues, therefore, in order that by them we may enjoy the blessed Trinity, that is the chief and incommutable good *."

In proportion, however, as the blessed clean of heart drew nearer to the enjoyment of that vision, which is the reward of faith, they passed beyond the sphere of history, and the mode of their progressive illumination becomes less visible. As long as it was a question of their beholding God in creatures, in the miraculous operations of his Providence, in the acts which belong to exoteric mysticism, in the traditions of the human race, and in the holy Scriptures, it was not difficult for one of earthly temper like him who collects their scattered thoughts on this page, to illustrate their advance, and confirm it from historic records; but now that we are required to observe them in relation to the church, and to the sacred mysteries of religion—acts of love, vigils of praise and prayer, and midnight choir, all shadows of the service done above, all fruitful in the gifts of esoteric mysticism, being the means ordained to conduct them to the glorious consummation of their immortal destiny, our course seems about to terminate in darkness; for what eye can follow that illuminated life succeeding to the purgative which leads immediately to the intimate union of the soul with God? Here each step transcends our conception. History indeed attests, from time to time, incidentally the fact of holy rites and mysteries, vested in dense impenetrable blaze, having been observed throughout the ages of faith. We know that the church, as one mysterious family, was found every where; that from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, the clean oblation was daily offered up; that seraphic hymns ascended at benediction from evening choirs; that sacrifice was the great business of life with countless multitudes in every age during sixteen centuries; that men participated in the sacred mysteries of communion at the holy mass; that they had constantly access from morning till evening to the sacramental presence of Christ, which was reserved for them every where; that they prayed, that they meditated, that they remained often fixed in contemplation; that they experienced ecstasies, and sometimes in that

* Hug. St. Vict. *Speculum de Myst.* Eccles. cap. 9.

state expired; but with that knowledge our observation ends; for if thou dost require us to show what corresponded to these outward acts in the interior world of the soul, to fathom the full tide of spiritual joy and love resulting from them, to unfold what they saw when so employed, to explain the mode of the operation of these mysteries, or to say why such means should have been ordained, ah! greatly hast thou mistaken the limits of our skill. High rapture, ineffable transport to the intelligence, no doubt, would be the power to reply;

“ But not the soul
That is in heav’n most lustrous, nor the seraph
That hath his eyes most fix’d on God, shall solve
What thou hast ask’d: for in the abyss it lies
Of the everlasting statute, sunk so low
That no created ken may fathom it *.”

This alone we know, that there is no Thabor without the road of the cross, no transfiguration without a passion, no gift without engagement, no full power without full obedience; such we can discover to be the immutable, fundamental law, in the mystic kingdom †.

There is, however, another path bordering upon this divine world, which, to a certain point, is open for us; for as the philosophers taught that natural things were the works of God, by which men could arrive at a knowledge of his virtue and glory; so the men of faith showed, with the friar Savonarola ‡, that the things which were done in the church, perceptible by the senses and by reason, were the works of the same God, by which they could arrive at the knowledge of the majesty and glory of Jesus Christ, who is to us invisible; that while the one saw God in the wondrous works of nature, the other beheld him, as it were, permanently incarnate in the Church, present in those who governed it, present in the lowest of its members, and continually re-appearing under a sacramental form in the mysteries of faith, and with such clearness and certainty too, that the mere observation of the effect which that vision wrought upon them, yea the mere reflection as seen painted in their countenances, was thought by many to furnish one of the most con-

* Dante, Par. xxi. † Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 175.

‡ Triump. Crucis, lib. i. c. 1.

vincing proofs that all things announced by revelation to the human race were true. Some, indeed, have presumed to pass beyond the mark, and ask, how could God establish or preserve such a society on earth, and how could he give us what he promised? and others vainly have essayed to comprehend infinity, and make the mortal measure the divine. Well it would have been for the latter had they hearkened to such warning sounds as come to every human mind, resembling those which Dante heard when he looked too stedfastly upon Beatrice, the light of divine truth, conveying nought but this "too fix'd a gaze *." They laid claim to more philosophy, yet alas! in sooth, beating their pinions, thinking to advance, they backward fell. Grace ought first to have been gained, and then they would have known, with Hugo of St. Victor, that by loving, rather than by disputing, men advance towards God †. You ask, why should such stupendous acts of condescension be required to purify the soul? Brother, the answer would have been, no eye of man not perfected, nor fully ripened in the flame of love, may fathom this decree. The human mind, as Abadæus says, must of necessity consort with darkness, either with that which arises from the cupidities and prejudices of the mortal nature, or with that which arises from God himself, and which brings hereafter the effulgence of his glory :

————— O splendour !

O sacred light eternal ! who is he,
 So pale with musing, in Pierian shades,
 Or with that fount so lavishly imbued,
 Whose spirit would not fail him in the essay
 To represent thee such as thou didst seem
 To hearts that were made pure.

All things are veiled to your mortal eyes ; you cannot discern the real nature of the meanest plant or reptile—and yet you would behold the sovereign God divested of a veil and shadow. Ah ! it should be the dictate even of that natural philosophy, in which you take such pride, to say with the ascetic, " I have truly, and I adore him whom the angels adore in heaven ; but at present, I in faith, they in essence and without veil. It becomes me

* XXXII.

† Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesiæ, cap. ix.

to be content with the light of true faith, and in that to walk until shall dawn the day of eternal brightness, and the shadows of figures pass away." Savonarola remarks, that "assistance towards the immediate attainment of the final end of man, was one of the innumerable benefits resulting to the human race from the Incarnation of the Divine Word. The beatitude of man consists, indeed, in the vision of the divine essence; but a consideration of its immense sublimity might deter him from attempting to attain it, therefore he was shown a union of the divine and human nature, in order to have argument for believing that an union of his intelligence with God was not impossible; and to his senses were presented the Incarnate word, the humanity of Christ, with all the mysteries of his institution clothed in material forms, by which the clean of heart, even in the present life, could truly, and not in figure, see God*." Moreover, the divine wisdom provided, by the discipline of the church, as well as by the psychological laws of sympathy with external nature, that things, of themselves senseless and earthly, should be instrumental to spiritual visions: therefore the bones and other relics of canonized saints, the symbols that denoted ecclesiastical authority, the rites attending festivals as required by the rubric, the image of the cross, the paintings which represented Christ, his blessed Mother, the holy Apostles, and the other friends of God, were the means of preserving innumerable minds in communion with the celestial world; insomuch that, where faith had diffused its highest illumination, a glance at any of these objects was frequently followed by ecstasy. The effects which they produced upon the clean of heart are attested in numberless authentic records; as in those relative to St. Rosa of Peru, St. Catharine of Sienna, and others of whom Goërres speaks.

But visions of the highest order must now engage our thoughts. Proceeding then with timid steps, reverential and subdued, the initiated few, who have outstretched the neck in time for food of angels, will not require to be told that the purified race saw God in those adorable mysteries of faith, which placed before their ravished eyes, in presence real, Him from whom perfection to the

* *Triump. Crucis*, lib. iii. 7.

perfect springs. Yes! there is on earth a light, whose goodly shine makes the Creator visible to all created, that in seeing him alone have peace. Throughout the circle of the Church all is one beam reflected from this first, giving to every part light and warmth. "Moses did not dare to look upon the fire; and, behold," exclaims St. Odo of Cluny, "there is more on the altar to which we so unworthily approach; for the fire was not God, but a creature from which the voice of God proceeded; but here is the body of Christ, in which dwells all the plenitude of divinity*."

Such was the great mystery of faith, the divine deposit, the great traditional secret of the Christian family, recognized even by schismatics in the earliest times, as St. Optatus remarks, "the principle, in short, from which the whole Catholic society, spread over the world, derived its strength and its vitality: all that it prized flowed from this source—the divine Eucharist, most holy, sanctifying all that was most holy and sanctifying, in which, as the Master of the Sentences said, "He is wholly taken, who is the fountain and origin of all grace†." And yet, O speech! how feeble and how faint art thou to give conception birth! Rejoicing spirits encompass it with so divine a song, that fancy's ear records it not; and the pen passeth on and leaves a blank. "O, how admirable thy operations Lord!" exclaim the men who thus saw God, "how powerful thy virtue! how ineffable thy truth! Thou hast said, and all things were made; and this too is done which thou hast ordered. Wondrous thing, surpassing human intelligence!—rejoice my soul, and render thanks for such a noble gift; for such a singular consolation left for thee in this valley of tears!"

If any one enquired respecting the manner in which the mystery of the Eucharist was accomplished, by what means God and our nature join, he was shortly answered in the words of the same great authority, "*Mysterium fidei credi salubriter potest, investigari salubriter non potest.*" Enough! it was the saving oblation, fragrant with virgin sweetness, foretold by prophets, instituted by Him whose will is power and whose work is mercy,

* S. Odonis, Abb. Clun. ii. Collat. lib. ii. Bibliothec. Clun.

† Pet. Lomb. Sent. lib. iv. dist. 8.

and offered up throughout the universal Church by the elect of God.

The historical question, respecting the antiquity of this belief, need not detain us long. In the administration of all mysteries, the discipline of the Church has varied in different ages; so that some objectors have as much reason to require immersion in baptism, as others to complain of the restriction of the chalice. In times of persecution, the holy communion used to be sent under the sole species of bread, whereas in the assemblies children only received under the species of wine. The question, however, is respecting the doctrine; and the most learned of the moderns, Leibnitz, admits that the real presence was that of the primitive church*.

St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, speaking of certain heretics, says, "they abstain from the Eucharist and the prayer, because they do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for our sins." These heretics were the gnostics who, as St. Epiphanius says, deny that Christ came in the flesh; and as it was their tenet that God never became incarnate, they could not assent to the doctrine of his sacramental presence. That this belief of the primitive Church had followed every where the preaching of the Apostles, and of apostolic men, is also clear from history. "We are compelled to believe," says a recent historian of the middle ages, who, with the same breath, is so unhappy as to declare his own incredulity, "that the Anglo Saxons understood Christ to be immolated on the altar, and we may observe that the same opinions were entertained by the Scottish ecclesiastics†." Such, most assuredly, was the belief of the universal Church. It is not to be supposed, however, that there were no contradicting voices. The same description of men who opposed and derided our divine Saviour in the person of Jesus, walking in Palestine, resisted and defied him in sacramental presence, in the assemblies of the faithful. "Si discipuli durum habuerunt istum sermonem, quid inimici?" asks St. Thomas. How should the impure discern God in time, who, without some total renovation of their nature, will not see him for eternity? How must not their blindness correspond with that of demons,

* Syst. Theolog.

† Lardner, Cyclop. iii. 328.

who, as the Angel of the School remarks, cannot know God, though most manifest according to himself, because they have not a clean heart by which alone God is seen *. In some of the very ancient chronicles, published by Dacherius, we read of individuals who presumed to question the divine doctrine of the blessed sacrament; nor was it only the profane and intemperate who evinced hostility: the pride of the understanding was also liable to create a disposition to philosophize in opposition to the simplicity of divine faith. The ninth century beheld men of a character from which such opposition was almost inevitable.—Gottschalk is described by Hincmar as a man of elate mind, impatient of quiet, desirous of new words, inflamed with an insatiable ambition of honour, rash and tumultuous, that he might render his name famous by a vain ostentation of mind and a certain false novelty †. In the same age, John Erigena composed a book on the Eucharist, which, being written more in the style of a philosophical treatise than of a theological work, contained expressions that differed from the universal canonized language of theologians: though, as we have already remarked, it is impossible to discover the nature of the opinion, as the book was lost soon after his time; and at all events the error to which these expressions were thought favourable, which was immediately condemned, made no impressions, and no one attempted to support it: nevertheless Hincmar of Rheims, and Adrevald Floriacensis collected the Sentences of the holy Fathers to guard against the danger of any novelty being introduced.

It was not till the eleventh century that Berenger appeared, that degenerate disciple of St. Fulbert of Chartres. To him opposed themselves, of the Episcopal order, Adelmann of Brixen, Hugo of Lincoln, Guitmundus Aversanus, Deoduinus Leodiensis, Lanfranc of Canterbury, and Durandus. Synods were especially convened to condemn him,—at Rome thrice, under St. Leo IX., and once severally at Vercueil, Paris, Tours, Florence, Rouen, and Poitiers. Obedient to the sentence which condemned his error, Berenger returned to France a sincere penitent, and died at Tours in 1088, a rare example of contrition, as is attested by Clarus Floriacensis,

* I. q. lxiv. art. i.

† Epist. ad Nicol. pass.

William of Malmesbury, St. Antoninus, Vincent of Beauvais, and Martinus Polonus. Then followed an interval of peace. Though still, no doubt, the Eucharistic vision of God was reserved for the clean of heart, for allusion is often made to the blindness of others. "We read in the Gospel," says St. Bernard, "that while the Saviour preached on one occasion on the mystery of eating his body, some said, '*Durus est hic sermo*,' and that these no longer went with him; but that the disciples being asked by him whether they also wished to go away, replied, '*Domine, ad quem ibimus? Verba vitæ æternæ habes*.'" So I say to you, my brethren, down to the present day it is manifest that the words which Jesus speaks are spirit and life, and some follow him, but to others they seem hard, and they seek elsewhere a miserable consolation *."

In the sixteenth century the controversy was revived, but it was in the more ancient form of gross sensuality resisting faith, rather than in that of a speculative genius desiring to appeal to reason from its decisions. An historian cannot find, through all the gloomy circles of the world's history, spirits that swelled so proudly against God as those which were then enrolled against the mysteries of faith: but still the banners were the same. The weapons of the modern adversaries are therefore only those of the old ones refurbished; and we find accordingly, that the mode of resisting them, in the early and middle ages, was the same as that which is now adopted by the guides of holy truth. The early Fathers, in order to show their hearers the possibility of this mystery, remind them of the most stupendous miracles, such as the change of the rod of Moses into a serpent, the fall of manna during forty years, the multiplication of the loaves in the desert, the change of water into wine, and in fine the creation of the world. St. Chrysostom compares the act of consecration to the mystery of the Incarnation, which involves, he says, a still greater difficulty †; and by his words, if duly weighed, that argument is void which often has perplexed the foolish; for, in being man, and in sacramental presence, it follows, as he observes, that Christ was at once visible and invisible, and that in neither manifestation did he depart

* De Diversis, Serm. v.

† Hom. 2. in Matt.

from one place to another, or deprive the heavens of his glory in order to come into the world, or remain on earth to accomplish the work of our deliverance and sanctification. But in what manner, you ask, is this done? "Do you not fear," exclaims St. Chrysostom in reply, "do you not shudder? What! if any one were to ask in what manner our bodies and souls shall be immortal, would it not be a ridiculous question? Because it does not belong to the human understanding to inquire into such things, but only to believe: there should be no curious investigation where the immense power of the Promiser is a sufficient demonstration. Why do you search into inscrutable things*?" The same line of argument is steadily pursued through the middle ages. All the objections advanced by modern adversaries were then anticipated and refuted. Richard of St. Victor remarks that, "when Christ gave his body to his disciples he carried it in his hands;" that "he is torn and never injured, distributed daily in innumerable places and always whole and undivided†." They could discern consequences without the assistance of our writers.

St. Anselm seems to have foreseen all the objections of the nineteenth century, in his treatise *De Sacramento Altaris*, when he alludes to persons who are troubled by certain passages in the works of St. Augustine. Let us hear St. Hugo of Lincoln addressing Berenger, "argue no longer, I pray, concerning the divine Omnipotence, for as you cannot comprehend how the Word was made flesh, so neither can you understand how that bread is changed into the flesh, and that wine transformed into the blood, unless the faith of Omnipotence teach you. Cease to attack the celestial mystery. Consider that the will and word of God predominates over all nature, and that he is able to change them according to what is written, *Mutabis ea, et mutabuntur*; for with God to will and to perform are the same‡."

"You argue with subtilty against the divine doctrine of the Eucharist," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but what can your rhetoric, or sophistry, or your ratiocination,

* Hom. vi. in Joan.

† Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. 1. lib. iv. c. 18.

‡ Hugonis Lingonensis Tractat. de Corpore et Sanguine Domini.

effect here? This is to cast dust against the stars. Your dialectics cannot reach so high. Behold where you stand, and mark how much higher is faith than all your intelligence *." Methinks the blessed clean of heart could attest the reality of their vision, in language that from being pious, was not the less philosophical, and we might assuredly add, not the less imbued with love and mercy; for hear the concluding words of one who has recently treated on this divine mystery, in allusion to the men who are engaged by their profession to deny it: "Are they aware," he asks, "of what they are doing? Are they aware that they are attacking a faith the most fruitful in every kind of grace; a faith which preserves in all places the spirit of devotion and of sacrifice? May He who was meek and humble of heart, in presence of the proud ingratitude of those whom he came to save, remove from our lips the least word of bitterness against these unhappy despisers of the most admirable of his gifts. And how would it be possible to speak to them of it excepting in a language full of love! If such a language did not exist, it would be invented for the purpose of speaking of the Eucharist. But, at the same time a mournful indignation constrains us to rise up against their deplorable ministry. Profoundly impressed with this double sentiment, we should not know how to express this sorrowful affection with which they inspire us, if we did not remember the words of Christ to the first despiser of the mystery of faith—those words so tender, and so overwhelming—Friend, wherefore art thou come? Amice, ad quid venisti †?"

Turning our backs upon these spirits, plunged in woe and darkness, without remedy, since what hope for them who want that manna, without which he roams through this rough desert retrograde, who most toils to advance his steps, let us briefly mark the sentiment of the blessed clean of heart in ages of faith, with respect to their sacramental Eucharistic vision of God. In the first place they too had difficulties—they too had the trials of intelligence and of sense, but they triumphed over them—they too could hear the serpent, but they turned from him with the quickness of instinct. To whom

* Hugo St. Vict. *Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesiæ*, cap. 7.

† Gerbet *S. Matt.* xxvi. 50.

should we go, O Lord ! they cried with a doctor of the Church. " Whither should we go ? To flesh and blood ? To reason ? To philosophy ? To the wise of this world ? To murmurers ? To the unbelieving ? To those who daily ask us how can he give us his flesh to eat ? How can he be in heaven, if, at the same time, we eat his flesh on earth ? No, Lord, we do not wish to go to them, nor to those who leave thee : we will follow St. Peter, and will say, Master, to whom should we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life." " Faith," say the schoolmen, " is an obscure habit, infused into the soul ; it is figured by the cloud which covered the Israelites, which was both darksome and illuminative—obstructing the view of the Egyptians, and enlightening the faithful people." Man living in darkness can only be enlightened by darkness, as the prophet king observes, saying, " the night teacheth knowledge to the night." Do you desire the recompense of intellectual purity, the beatitude of the clean of heart, you must believe, " for unless ye believe," says the prophet, " ye shall not understand *." As St. Gregory observes on our Lord's appearance to the two disciples, " to them," speaking of him, " he exhibited his presence, but to them doubting concerning him, he concealed himself."

The blessed sacrament of the Eucharist, like the doctrine of baptism and the incarnation, was a trial of faith. Did men find this faith faltering within their hearts ? Did their reason endeavour to revolt ? Did their senses attempt to exert more than their due influence ? The clean of heart were not troubled ; they only prayed with greater fervency ; they recalled to mind Jesus Christ instituting this wonderful sacrifice, with an irresistible authority, and with words of life ; they beheld the Apostles preaching throughout the world this same sacrifice ; they followed this immemorial tradition of the Church which has received this mystery, which has firmly believed in it and practised it, without interruption, defending it unceasingly against all the enemies which hell has raised up against it. They retraced before their eyes a lively and rapid image of the numberless prodigies which it has effected, having been the strength of martyrs, the constancy of confessors, the purity of virgins, the patience

* Isa. vii.

of saints, and their detachment from the world, the hope, the consolation of all. They too, therefore, believed, borne alone by the example and authority of the whole Church, by so many virtues and miracles, by the reason of God, before which theirs was a pure nothing. They approached with confidence and humility; faith recovering strength, charity was reanimated; their Saviour waited for them; he gave himself to them, a flood of grace flowed into their soul; and thus did a trial become for them, the most excellent and signal of all graces.

This was the light which renewed the face of the earth, and replaced Eden in its wilderness. This changed all things; this appeased the restless cravings of the human heart—substituted truth for error, and dissipated its enemies. O, holy Church, Catholic and Roman, if all that hitherto is told of thee were in one praise concluded, it were too weak to furnish out this turn. The human race had preserved the remembrance of an original society between God and man, and the same tradition had perpetuated the hope, that more intimate communications would be re-established by the Redeemer, universally expected. The belief in a God present only by his grace, was never able to satisfy that immense craving of the human heart, for a closer union with the Deity. “The writings of the old philosophers abound with indications of its existence,” Plotinus says, “that the vision of God is a vision of such beauty, and worthy of such love, that without it, however rich in other goods, man is most unhappy *.” Porphyry held, that by certain theurgical consecrations, minds were rendered capable of seeing God †. Plato says, “that men of all kinds taste of certain pleasures, but that to taste the delight of being able to see the essence of all pleasure, and of all existence, is impossible for any one but for a philosopher ‡.” “This desire not understood aright,” as a French theologian says, “erewhile perverted well nigh all the world, so that it turned to fabled names of Jove, and Mercury, and Mars, for every vicious practice is founded on a just feeling, diverted from its true object, as every error is founded on the abuse of some truth. The propensity to theurgy, which was so vehement among all Pagan nations,

* S. August. de Civ. Dei, x. 16.

† Id. x. 9.

‡ De Repub. lib. ix.

as well as that inclination to recognize, in extraordinary personages, some God veiled under human forms, arose therefore from this natural longing of the rational creature, to recover its original felicity. This divine instinct pervaded, agitated the whole universe, and all worship, even in the superstitions connected with it, was in some measure the prophetic aspiration of the human race, seeking every where for the personal presence of the divinity. Jesus Christ appears, and the world breathes again. The expectation was fulfilled. "This faith in the real presence produced immediately," as Gerbet remarks, "this remarkable result, that among Christians, the universal mania for divination—for the invocation of spirits, for magical operations, was suddenly suppressed. It was not merely the exterior practices that yielded to the severe prohibitions of the Church—it was the propensity itself, hitherto so violent, so indomitable, that became appeased in the heart of man, and gave way to a profound calm—the natural consequence of an immense desire having been at length satisfied." So through the long lapse of ages which faith illuminated, there is heard from the race of men an uninterrupted voice of praise, and literally witnessed a sleepless act of adoration. For, behold God, the Saint of saints, the Creator of men, and the Lord of angels! is present on the altar. Those who are in chosen fellowship advanced to the great supper of the blessed Lamb, whereon who feeds hath every wish fulfilled, can say with truth that Jesus, the most sweet, most benign Jesus, is in the midst of them; they see him—blessed are they. They see God. "O, invisible Creator of the world, how wondrously dost thou act with us!" exclaims one of that happy number, "how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose things with thy elect, in offering them in the sacrament thyself!" But, alas! the blindness of man!

Why does not every heart commingle with the flame that shrouds that glory? Is obduracy to be justified by repeating the language of the disciples, who, when they had Christ with them, at the same time desired to see the Father, saying, "Domine, ostende nobis Patrem, et sufficit nobis," not having then been taught that to whom the Son sufficed not, the Father could not be manifest; or, are we to go back to the question of the benighted philosopher, and ask with Cicero, "Tibi hoc incredibile, quia

beatissimum?" Why should not the Saviour's promise be fulfilled? Why should not the clean of heart be comforted? Yes, when we recall to mind those ancient holy men, many of them the wonder of their age for wisdom, the glory of their age for earthly grandeur, who evinced seraphic love for this divine mystery; when we recollect the number of profound angelic intelligences, which recognized in it the source of all their light, of all their virtue; when with the eyes of mind we behold them bowed unto the earth, in presence of the Eucharist, or with looks directed towards the hallowed steps, so full of joy, as if they saw descending from them every light in heaven, the natural impulse is to exclaim with the Ascetic, "*O vera ardens fides eorum, probabile existens argumentum sacræ præsentiae tuæ!*" Yes, for not to speak of streams of living radiance, which played round the outward fleshly dwelling, as we read of Vincent Ferrier, the bishop Kentigern, Rosa of St. Mary, Thomas the Lombard, Barnabas of Pistorio, Tolomei, Catharine of Bologna, and innumerable others*, the fragrant of heaven rising from within proclaimed, that he had visited the human soul, and entered it with his glory. Here, at length, is order with equality, the rich man and the beggar side by side, in charity made one; for what availeth ignorance or skill, where God immediate rules, and nature awed suspends her sway? These hearts of the ages of faith are not left without afflation of eternal bliss; they exhale a perfume, transcending all sweetness, which attests that they have commingled with the source of all delight—the author of all purity—that God has revealed himself within them, and that he who had no rest upon the cross, has rested there. "*Et reclinabit in te,*" says Richard of St. Victor, "*qui reclinatorium non habuit in cruce*†."

"Truly it is thy beloved who visiteth thee," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but he cometh invisible—he cometh occult—he cometh incomprehensible—he cometh that he may move thee, not that he may be seen by thee—he cometh that he may admonish thee, not that he may be comprehended by thee—he cometh not that he may fulfil thy desires, but that he may excite thy affection—he presenteth thee with the first fruits of his love, not with the

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 322.

† In Cantic. Cant. 12.

plenitude of perfect satiety." "Do you feel regret," my sisters, said St. Theresa, "at not being able to behold him with your bodily eyes? Such a regret is little reasonable. It is one thing to have beheld him as he was formerly, when clothed with all the appearances of humanity, and it is another to contemplate him as he is now, resplendent with celestial glory. How could mortal eyes sustain his vision? Be thankful that he is pleased to veil his majesty, when you have permission to approach him *." His beauty so shines, that, were no tempering interposed, thy mortal puissance would, from its rays, shrink as the leaf doth from the thunderbolt.

The recompense of the clean of heart was also the principle of their spiritual existence—they beheld God from being pure, and they were pure in consequence of beholding him; as the angels cannot sin, because their beatitude consists in seeing God by essence, "the essence of God," as St. Thomas says, "being the essence of goodness †." This leads us to consider the outward effects of the Eucharistic vision in ages of faith. "Plus valet Deus operari, quam homo intelligere potest," and he who wrote these words had himself within his own bosom experience of their truth. Of the extraordinary visions resulting from the divine Eucharist Goërres has produced instances. Truly wondrous things, in this respect, are related of Petrus Tolosanus, Angela of Foligno, the abbot Hugo of Cluny, the Cistercian Juliana, Cassetus the Carmelite, St. Francis Borgia, St. Catherine of Sienna, and countless others ‡.

Let us hear St. Augustin attesting only the ordinary results. "Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ." Some great thing, I know not what, is promised to us. Does he wish to say it, and is he unable, or is it that we do not understand? I fear not to say, my brethren, that not even by the holy tongues and hearts, through which truth is announced to us, can what they would announce be either uttered or conceived. It is a thing great and ineffable, and they themselves only see in part, as the Apostle says, "Now we see in part, as in an ænigma, but then face to face." Behold, they seeing in an ænigma, thus burst forth: what shall we

* The Road to Perfection. † 1. Q. lxii. art. 8.

‡ Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 119.

be then, when we shall see face to face, what they could not find a heart to conceive, or a tongue to reveal, or men to understand? But why does he say, *Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ?*” He sought for a word to speak of human things, which he said; and because he saw men losing their understanding, through the immoderate drinking of wine, he saw what he would express; because when that ineffable joy is received, the human understanding as it were perishes, it becomes divine, and is drunken with the abundance of the house of God. Whence in another Psalm it is said, “*Calix tuus inebrians quam præclarus est!*” This was the cup of which the martyrs drank, when going to their passion, they no longer knew their own. Who so drunken as he who does not distinguish his weeping wife, or children, or parents? They did not distinguish, they did not think that these were before their eyes. Wonder not, for they were drunken. Whence were they drunken? Behold, they took the cup whence they were drunken. Wherefore he also returned thanks to God, saying, “*Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo.*” Therefore, brethren, we are children of men; and we hope under the shadow of his wings, and we are drunken of the abundance of his house. “*Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ: et torrente voluptatis tuæ potabis eos:*” water is called a torrent when it comes with a rushing force. There will be a rushing of the mercy of God, to refresh and inebriate those who place their trust under the shadow of his wings*.

If when the Word made flesh dwelt in the midst of men, the mere touch of his vestments was able to cure the sick, can we doubt, asks St. Theresa, that a lively faith will obtain miracles from him when he comes to establish his residence within us†? The ordinary miracles which this mystic vision wrought in ages of faith, of which even history must take note, were those of virtues and those of wisdom. “Love itself is knowledge,” as St. Gregory says‡; and here was the fountain of all true love, and consequently of all wisdom. Do you ask whence the Angel of the School derived that light which has illuminated the Church? The historian of his order

* St. Augustin Enarrat. in Ps. xxxv.

† The Road to Perfection.

‡ Hom. 27. in Evang.

says expressly, that he drew it from the holy sacrament of the altar: all his works demonstrate, that it was this prime enlightener who gave him strength on the high triumph of his Church to gaze, and virtue to utter what he saw; nor is it less certain that it was from this disposing influence supreme the feeling artist learned to trace those lustrous images of the pure and holy which have made cities and realms glorious; for here all perfection was vouchsafed, and every gift that life could teem with; so that the human nature, without that sweet medicine to clear and strengthen sight, never was, or can be, such as it was in them. The fountain at whose source the clean of heart drank their beams, supplied them in as many modes with light as there were different offices in the Christian life, each according to the virtue it required, equal in love and sweet affection. "Look then," saith the poet contemplatist of these ages, "how lofty and how vast the eternal might, which, broken and dispersed over such countless mirrors, yet remained whole in itself and one, as at the first *."

And here I must observe, while speaking of the moral consequences of the Eucharistic vision, that if there were no other evidence in proof of the divine origin of the Catholic religion, an attentive observer would feel compelled to believe that God was its author, from the one consideration of its effects produced, through this divine mystery, upon the human nature; so exactly do they correspond with all its wants and all the peculiarities of its constitution; so completely do they restore all its parts, and establish an harmonious unity. Whence could such tempering and moulding proceed but from the same intelligence and hand which created man? for it is this which completes him, which purifies, which gives the last touch to this admirable painting of the rational creature. Faith is like those transparent unctions, which revive the work of the artist when it is sunk into the canvass, or clouded over and defiled; it changes nothing of the original lines, not a stroke of the pencil, however fine, perishes under its gentle action; it only refreshes and restores the whole to that pristine liveliness and beauty, which it possessed when first it left its author's hands. Such is the Catholic religion in general, and the Eucha-

* Par. xxix.

ristic union in particular, in relation to the human character. It is not that it destroys the inequality of natural gifts, or that it yields the fruit of subsequent acquisition, but that it gives an ineffable charm, something heavenly indescribable, to all gifts, and a grace which every one can distinguish, and which no artificial acquirements can ever supply. Take any instance of a nature which has been wholly consigned to this influence, and then judge: pass by the natural virtues and wisdom and nobleness of men, which you might say, perhaps, could be ascribed to studies, experience, and condition; stand and consider the ignorant and simple, who draw all from the Church, from the altar, from faith and its mysteries. Remark that maiden, wife, and mother. Can the purest and highest intelligence conceive any thing more assimilated to the goodness and purity of God? You cannot be blind to the difference which exists under similar circumstances of nature where Catholicism has not been applied. See how many evils attach themselves to the best and sweetest dispositions, which are corrected here. See how this softens down every thing harsh, removes every thing ridiculous and unamiable; and O, what dulcet, rich, and glorious tones does it bring forth, and yet so secret in its operation, that all the while we think it is only nature. Nor do we err; for this, or rather approaching this, was nature in the state of innocence. "We know," says Savonarola, "that they who frequent these mysteries piously are so delighted in the divine worship, that they often remain in ecstasy with bodies immoveable,—that their countenance changes, emitting beams of sanctity, which render them lovely and venerable to all. And though in former times this occurred oftener than now, yet at the present day also we know many, not alone the simple, but the wise, in whom all this is verified. Whence then this ecstasy? whence this fervour? these warm sighs, these delicious tears, this ineffable jubilation of the Church, sounding in hymns and canticles of such passing sweetness? If these mysteries, these temples, these altars, these vestments, this order of ceremonies belong to vanity and labour lost, could man, especially when wise and of penetrating genius, by the use of these things be so wonderfully exalted and transformed? Could such illumination proceed from lies? Even the very order and the signification of the

things which are done in the Church, must be of divine, not of human invention: for there is nothing in this form of worship irrational, nothing without sense; but there is throughout the whole a harmony and an adaptation of parts like what we find in the universal works of nature, which no one, without perverse obstinacy, can refuse to ascribe to God*.”

But let us attend to the practice of the middle ages. A sense of their own indignity was not suffered by the ancient guides to interfere with the devotion of frequent access to this grace of sacramental union, and the manner in which they explain their conduct in this respect, is very characteristic of their exquisite art of blending the highest with the lowest things; “for,” says Louis of Blois, “as the son of a king while a youth rejoices in being able to play with those boys who are of obscure birth, and who are clad in vile raiment, so also the Son of the great King, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, willingly joins himself, by the sacrament of the Eucharist, not only to the perfect, but also to those who are obnoxious to many imperfections, who do not love their imperfections, but endeavour to grow better, and to be delivered from all deadly sin by the help of God†.”

Mabillon has shown that, in the tenth century, the laity were required, under strict obligation, to receive the holy communion at least four times in each year‡. This was only determining the minimum consistent with the Christian profession; for the desire of the Church had always been that so earnestly expressed by St. Licinius of Angers, in the sixth age, that the people would frequently partake of that divine food, by means of which their Saviour would remain in them, and they in Him. The fathers of the Council of Paris, in the year 829, addressed the emperor Louis le Debonnaire, in these terms: “We warn you to receive the body of our Lord whenever it is possible for you to do so; and, by your example, to excite those of your court to communicate frequently§.” At that time the practice of daily communion was frequent. Symphorius Amalarius wrote to

* *Triump. Crucis*, ii. 10.

† *Lud. Blos. Enchirid. Parvulorum*, lib. i. in fin.

‡ *Præfat. in Sæcul. Bened.* 3.

§ *Longueval, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. v. 320.

recommend it; but Gennadius of Marseilles only exhorted the people to communicate every Sunday. Walafrid Strabo seemed to consider that those who communicated but once in the year, at Easter, through a professed fear of being unworthy to approach it oftener, were proved by that very delay unworthy of communion then, since communion is a remedy against sins*.

By the second Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in the year 836, the faithful were required to receive the body of the Lord every Sunday, "lest, by withdrawing from the Sacraments, they should withdraw from salvation." Profane historians are obliged to notice the immense influence which the Christian mysteries produced upon the whole order of society. Hence it was that an interdict was found to be so great an evil. *Immensa vitia super crescebant*, say the contemporary writers†. Life, in all its ways and turnings, sanctified by the Church, appeared, says Hurter, alluding to an interdict, to be now severed from it. The sun-like splendour of higher consecrations was eclipsed, and the earthly existence remained without any intervention of the heavenly‡.

It remains only to consider the clean of heart in relation to the last sphere, which sees completion of their lofty aim in a mystic union with Him, who lives ever, and for ever reigns. "Do you wish to be great?" asks St. Augustin. "Begin," he continues, "by being little. Do you desire to construct a vast and lofty fabric? Think first about the foundation of humility; the higher is to be your structure, the deeper must be its foundation. What is to be the height of our building? to what elevation does its summit reach? I will tell you in one word, to the sight of God! Behold how lofty a thing it is! what a thing it is to see God! They who worshipped false gods, could easily see them; but they saw them who had eyes and saw not. To us is promised the vision of the living and seeing God§." The clean of heart discerned the whole immensity of this prodigious promise, both with respect to the future and to the present life, and yet it alarmed them not. Far from being induced to seek with wretched worshippers of old to bring down

* De Reb. Eccles. cap. 20.

† Hist. Epp. Antiss. in Labbé Bibl. T. 1.

‡ Geschicte, tom. iii. l. 351.

§ Serm. X. de Verb. Dom.

heavenly things to meet the human condition, they loved to contemplate that future destiny on the most awful side. Along with these ardent longings, these incessant aspirations after the union of their souls with God, unearthly, pure as the cherub's light were all their conceptions of his nature; for hear how they speak of him: "Alone, without an equal, distinct from all things by his infinite greatness, he possesses himself in the solitude of his being*." The Master of the Sentences remarked, however, as an example of the future society which is to be established between God and the reasonable soul glorified, that the soul has been joined to corporeal ligaments, and an earthly mansion, in order that man might know that since God can join together in one federation and friendship natures so dissimilar as body and soul, it will not be impossible for him hereafter to exalt the humility of the rational creature to a participation of his glory†. But how is the promise to be realized on earth? "What flesh," cries the Sibyl, "can endure to behold the God of heaven, who dwells in light inaccessible, since mortals cannot even stand against the sun with unaverted eyes‡?" St. Augustin distinguished three kinds of visions; the corporeal through the outward senses, the spiritual through the imagination and fancy, and the forms of corporeal things, and the intellectual, which is without such forms§.

According to Cardinal Bona, the scholastics deny, the mystics affirm, that a pure intellectual vision can be given in this mortal life||. Yet it was not found difficult to reconcile them, by the illustrious teachers who came forward in that twofold capacity. "All intellectual thought," says St. Bonaventura, "must be impure, because it can only apprehend things by means of phantasms, and can only conceive God phantastically; whereas seraphic love illuminates the soul without phantasms, and is therefore a nobler attainment of truth¶." To this there would be no dissenting voice in the school. Whatever may be their difference in respect to terms, both agree in holding that the vision which, as St. Augustin

* Tertullian.

† Petr. Lomb. lib. ii. Dist. 1.

‡ Clem. Alex. Strom. v. 14.

§ De Genesi ad Liter. xii. 6, 7.

|| Bona de Discret. Spirituum, 17.

¶ Mystica Theologica.

says, is the whole reward of faith*, may be partially enjoyed on earth. Nothing, it is true, can surpass the humility with which the schoolmen speak of the vision of God, as may be witnessed in the work of John Scot Erigena, entitled *De Visione Dei*; as also elsewhere, when he treats on the superessential nature and cause of all things †.

“O Lord!” exclaims St. Anselm, “with my whole heart I seek thy face, *Vultum tuum Domine requiro*. But certainly thou dost dwell in light inaccessible—and where is that light? or how can I approach to light inaccessible? What shall thy servant do who is cast so far from thy face, though he was made for beholding thee? O, I beseech thee, send me not away empty, who came hungering to seek thee! I will not attempt, O Lord, to penetrate thy altitude; for my intelligence is not comparable to thine; but I desire to understand a little of thy truth, which my heart believes and loves: not that I seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe that I may understand; for I believe this also, that unless I believe, I shall not understand ‡.”

St. Gregory, in his *Morals*, says that “whoever beholds wisdom, which is God, dies to the present world; for no one who lives after the flesh can behold Him, because no one can at the same time embrace God and the world.” That it is necessarily death to see God, is explained thus by Marius Victorinus:—“If any one should see God, he must die, because the life and intelligence of God are in themselves, not in act; but every act is external, and our life is thus external: therefore it is death to see God. We must, consequently, abandon external life if we wish to see God, and that will be death to us; for it will be the being made similar to what we behold.” Thus discourseth this most obscure writer. Nor are there wanting examples of this death. The seraphic virgin, Catherine of Sienna, often experienced this angelic death; and her soul became separated from all her organs, being absorbed in God, for in this state the body is deprived of its senses. Many other saints have similarly experienced the mystic death §.

* De Trinit. l.

† De Divis. Nat. l.

‡ S. Anselmi Prosologium, cap. 1.

§ Bona de Discret. Spirituum, 234.

The physical consequences of such visions have been observed with the eyes of science, and their reality cannot be questioned. St. Philip Neri, in his thirty-first year, on the feast of Pentecost, experienced an ecstasy of divine love and joy, in which he lay on the earth dissolved. On returning to himself, he found that his breast, over the heart, was swelled to the thickness of a hand. He lived fifty-two years after this event, but the expansion which gave more room to the heart remained unchanged to his death. In prayer, and at the altar, he used to suffer intensely from the internal flames which attended the wondrous activity of the organ, which so shook his shuddering frame that its trembling affected the entire chamber. On his body being opened after death, it was found that two of his left ribs had been broken, and the heart prodigiously enlarged. Goërres states the whole result of the anatomical examination, and the declaration of the physicians that it had a cause supernatural. Many other instances of a similar kind are well authenticated. Herrmann Joseph, of Steinfeld, experienced ecstasies which produced such effects upon his whole organic system, that, as they chiefly occurred on the festivals of the church, he used to say, *Festa sunt mihi infesta* *. Let the reader remember what was observed in the Fifth Book, and he will be able to conceive to what numbers the festivals of the Church were thus terrible.

St. Bernard, indeed, says this vision is not of the eyes, but of the heart, to which the Lord has promised it: this is the proper good of the heart †. But that the promise obtains in some measure, even in this life, a more literal fulfilment, was evidently the general conviction. To the perfect wisdom there was known to be a triple way—the purgative, the illuminative, and that of union, which included the divine vision ‡, that is, a joy which without it is inconceivable. How should not He be seen who was ever present? According to the words, “I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of my rest.”

Of the mystic visions of God, of heaven, and of the

* Goërres *die Christliche Mystik*, ii. 6. 11.

† *De Divers. Serm.* ii.

‡ *Henric. de Palma Mystica Theologia Prolog.*

saints, imparted to the blessed clean of heart, in ages of faith, it would be difficult to speak. Goërres, in his admirable work, has ventured to treat upon the wondrous things recorded of many of them. To Lidwina of Scheidam they were given during twenty-four years. Veronica of Binasco and Frances of Rome beheld the whole life of the Saviour, from his birth to his passion and death. Lucia of Narni and Johanna of Jesus Maria, in Burgos, beheld all the stages of our Lord's passion,—visions granted to so many, that Goërres treats of them in a separate class, under the title of Mystic Stations *. The vision of heaven described by Mary of Agreda is related in Spanish, in the great volume entitled, *The Mystic City of God*, which has been translated into many languages. Mary of Oignys used to behold our Lord at the different festivals, in the act of accomplishing the mystery which each commemorated. The light which St. Theresa saw was totally unlike our light: she declared that she beheld and learned in it, in one moment, such a multitude of things, that many years of meditation would not have enabled her to attain to the thousandth part of them. Herrmann Joseph of Steinfeld, when in the early choir the *Benedictus Deus Israel* was sung, used to fall into ecstasy, and behold a vision of angels. At the words of the Antiphon *propter nimiam Charitatem suam*, and the response of the choir for Easter, *Et David cum Cantoribus*, Beatrix of Nazareth beheld the brightness of the heavenly Jerusalem, and heard sounds so sweet and wonderful, that she fell to the ground. What was seen and heard in mystic visions by Christina of Stumbele, Catherine of Sienna, Joseph of Copertino, Magdalen of Pazzi, Dominicus of Jesu Maria, the Carmelite, Osanna of Mantua, and others, is attested by evidence which cannot be rejected without rejecting all human testimony †.

With such facts before them, it is not to be wondered at that Hugo of St. Victor and all the great philosophers of the middle age should have understood the seeing of God, which is to recompence the pure, to imply a temporal as well as an eternal vision. In effect, the whole spiritual life, and all contemplation and ascetic philosophy, signified nothing but an interior union with God,

* II. 471.

† Goërres *die Christliche Mystik*, ii. 247—57.

in which he was present and mystically revealed to the eyes of the mind. "They who have the Spirit of God," says Hugo, "see God; for they have that eye enlightened with which God can be seen." "The heat of the sun," observes St. Ambrose, "penetrates the most solid dwellings, and extends to the hidden roots of trees under the earth; and how must not the intellectual splendour of God shine into the hearts and thoughts of men *!"

Truly astonishing was the experience of the speculative as well as unconscious esoteric mysticism of the ages of faith, vivifying and illuminating above all sense and reason. Richard of St. Victor compares it to what befel the two disciples going to Emmaus. "What is it," he asks, "to have Christ, that is, the wisdom of God, present in a foreign species, unless to behold truth, not in its simplicity, but in a mirror or enigma? Without the house, as if in a journey, this vision is shown when the contemplation of sublime things is enjoyed by ecstasy, and as if in passing: it is as when two are going forth and walking—when reason and intelligence, exceeding human limits, by theft and surprise attain to the spectacle of sublime things †." "To attain God in mind," says St. Augustin, "is great beatitude." Richard of St. Victor, treating on the preparation of mind for contemplation only, says, "In this double church of thoughts and desires, in this unanimity of studies and of wills, the contemplative mind is divinely exalted ‡. What means," he asks, "that dividing of the soul and spirit, of which the apostle speaks, but that the spirit is separated from what is lower, that it may rise to the highest? It is separated from the soul, that it may be united to God—that it may adhere to Him, and so become one spirit with Him. O happy division and separation to be longed for, when what is passible, what is corruptible, dies with its passions, and what is spiritual, what is subtile, is sublimated to the vision of the divine glory, and transformed into its image §."

This was the end of all philosophy in ages of faith; this was the true object of all love of wisdom: "for

* *Officiorum lib. i. 14.*

† *De Erudit. Hom. Inter. i. lib. i. 20.*

‡ *De Præparat. an. ad Contemp. c. 84.*

§ *De Extermin. Mali, p. i. tract. iii. c. 18.*

what skills it," cries Duns Scotus, "to know the triple primacy of the first Being, the order and emanation of essentials and of notionals—to show with philosophers by natural reason, or with Catholics with certainty, though in an enigma, the perfection and immensity, the unity and singularity, of that first radical nature,—unless by well-doing, praying, and contemplating, the eye be purified and the affections purged as Scot requires; so that the glorious God may be truly seen and tasted in Himself, to whom be honour for ever. Amen *."

If any philosophers, at the syren voice of knowledge, seemed to linger in the rudiments of this world, as if they thought that life were given for the end of merely seeking and investigating truth, there was a mystic voice from the desert, which penetrated the schools of the middle ages, like that which awakened Dante and his guide when standing fixed in mute attention to hear Casella's song; and which caused them to depart with hurried step, when it exclaimed,—

"How is this, ye tardy spirits?

What negligence detains you loit'ring here?

Run to the mountain, to cast off those scales

That from your eyes the sight of God conceal †."

Towards the end of his commentary on the work of Dionysius, Hugo of St. Victor breaks out in these terms:—"I wish that my soul may never, through earthly stain, lose the brightness of interior light, or through the cold of sin dispel the holy fervour of devotion; but that, being from heaven enlightened and warmed, it may be changed into the likeness of God. O the blessed existence, that is united with the existence of all existences! O the blessed nature, which is fulfilled with the nature of all natures! What happiness would be comparable to such beatitude?"

Henceforth, reader, to the end of this Book we must proceed, as schoolmen say, without arguments. We are now so near the summit, that I feel the air is not for beings like myself. Hitherto I have followed at a distance the clean of heart, but now can follow them no more—my course here bounded, as each artist's is, when

* Id. de Primo Principio, cap. iv.

† Purg. ii.

it doth touch the limit of his skill. They who ascend higher must have bared the feet, and cast off all impediments that weigh the spirit down—as we are admonished by the verses of Isseltius, prefixed to the ladder of Paradise, which now may be within view, like the words which men find inscribed upon the rocks as they climb the craggy path which leads to some cloister far renowned :—

“ Quisquis ad hunc montem Climacum lecturus adibis
Sis monitus ; nudo non licet absque pede.
Si secus accedas, nil hîc mirabile cernes,
Omnia sordebunt ut male culta tibi.
Solve prius soleas, dabiturque videre Jehovaham,
Ardentemque rubum, multaue digna Deo.”

All that we can do will be to approach humbly to the holy brethren who sit here, to repose awhile, and hear them speak of what they see above, and tell how mortals can proceed farther, and describe the effects which immediately result from reaching to that loftiest point of purity and joy on earth.

“ As long as the soul,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “ had its triple eyes—those of the flesh, of reason, and of contemplation—open and unobscured, it saw clearly and rightly distinguished. But after the darkness of sin had entered, the eye of contemplation was extinguished, so as to see nothing ; the eye of reason became weak, so as to see vaguely ; and alone the eye of the flesh retained its full perspicacity. Hence it is that the hearts of men more easily consent to the things which they perceive with the eye of the flesh than to those which they attain with the sense of reason or the faculty of the mind ; because where they see without darkness they do not differ in judging. Man, therefore, having the eye of the flesh, can see the world and the things which are in the world ; likewise, having the eye of reason in part, he can see the mind partly, and the things which are in the mind ; but because he has not the eye of contemplation, he cannot see God and the things which are in God*.” This is restored to him by purity of heart, and by a participation in the mysteries of faith, yielding an obscure but supernatural light. In what sense the former was

* De Sacramentis, lib. i. p. x. c. 2.

understood, as connected with life and philosophy, has been shown in the commencement; but in immediate relation to the vision of God, it still remains to hear what the ancient teachers say. Blessed John of the cross, in his ascent of Mount Carmel, compares the stages of the soul's progress to three stages of the night: the first answering to the night of the passions, when they are mortified and laid asleep; the second to the state of the soul, which seeks the privation of every thing in order to rest solely upon faith, becoming insensible to the light of the senses and of the imagination, which is the mortification of the intelligence; the third to the withdrawing of the memory from things created, to fixing it upon God the Creator. The first of these, he says, may be compared to the hour of night-fall, which first involves all ways in obscurity; the second, which is the night of faith, resembles midnight, when every thing is invisible; the third corresponds with the last watch of the night, or, rather, with break of day, to which succeeds the light of the glorious sun, or the full possession of the sight of God. This is more briefly expressed by St. Augustin, saying, "Inasmuch as they die to this world, men see God; and inasmuch as they live to it, they see Him not *." The fire of passion falls upon them, and they see not the light of the sun †.

Richard of St. Victor describes in another manner the progress of this illumination:—"What is it to enter the cloud at the approach of the divine vocation, unless to depart in mind, and to darken in it, as it were by a cloud of oblivion, the memory of adjacent things. Hence, also, the lucid cloud overshadowed the disciples of Christ. One and the same cloud overshadowed them by shining, and illuminated by overshadowing them; because it both illuminated to divine and clouded over to human things ‡." This was felt by Dante, after he had looked upon the everlasting splendour; for then he said,—

" My tongue shall utter now no more
E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the babe's
That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast §."

* De Doct. Christ. ii. 7.

‡ De Contemplat. i. v. c. 2.

† Ps. 57.

§ Par. xxxiii.

“We must first,” says Richard elsewhere, “desert Egypt and pass the sea; the Egyptian food must first fail, before we can receive the celestial aliment. Let him pass the Red Sea, let him study to expel all grief and bitterness from his heart, and then he may be satiated with internal sweetness. The Egyptians must be subdued, perverse manners must perish, lest the angelic citizens should disdain a degenerate guest. Beyond a doubt the love of God, the more fully it conquers every other affection, the more abundantly does it refresh the soul with internal sweetness. In this state the mind sucks honey from the rock, and oil from the hardest stone; in this state the mountains distil sweetness, and the hills flow with milk and honey; in this state the Lord often descends from heaven, and visits him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death: but while he exhibits his presence, he showeth not his face; as yet clouds and darkness are around him; as yet his throne is in the column of the cloud; and although he appears in fire, it is yet more a kindling than an illuminating flame; for it kindles the affection, but not as yet enlightens the understanding: the soul, therefore, while in this state, sees as if in the night, as if under the cloud, as if in a mirror or enigma, but not yet face to face*.” In the meanwhile, love ought always to increase in us from knowledge, and nevertheless knowledge from love; so that, by a mutual ministration, they may both conduce to the growth of each other. “From the visible world,” he continues, “is the Creator seen. This vision is common to the evil and to the good, for in this manner all men see God; in this manner the philosophers saw him, who yet did not find him by love. He passes to man as in an image of his soul, by reason and intelligence; he passeth, however, not to all men, but only to the good and spiritual, who find in themselves an image of God, according as they advance to perfection. Yet good men, however holy, see him only in the night, and in obscurity; for, as blessed Job speaks, ‘the stars are darkened by the shades of this night;’ for even they who shine by virtues and sanctity of life are obscured by the darkness of human blindness. Vices obscure and prevent contemplation; so that, until the mirror of the soul is made

* De Quat. *Gradibus Violentæ Charit.*

clean, there can be no faithful refraction of images. But to the eyes of a clean heart God shines as in a mirror which is clear as he is clear, and holy as he is holy. The pure of heart passeth in this manner to the Author of purity, from saints to the Saint of saints, where he finds his beloved *."

St. Bonaventura, having shown that the vision of God is to be obtained by love, proceeds in this manner :—"There is a twofold mode of attaining to that ardour of love—one scholastic and common, the other mystic and secret. The first is by way of inquisition and elevation, beginning from inferior things and ascending to the summit by exercise, by meditation and philosophic reasoning from the phenomena of nature; the second mode of rising to God is far nobler and more easy, and that is the unitive wisdom, in the desire of love by flaming affections, the knowledge of God by ignorance, in which the mind abandons all things, and gives up itself, and is illuminated by the resplendent rays of inscrutable wisdom, in which there is no need of previous investigation or meditation; and this is attained by humility and prayer, and the immediate descent of the Holy Spirit; from which it follows that the soul always tends to God as directly as a stone falls to the earth †." "The vision of God," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "which by nature is granted to the philosopher, is communicated by grace to the clean of heart, which is the light of faith, to which the intelligence ascends by ten degrees—by hearing the wisdom of faith, by appeasing the movements of passion in the mind, of which Daniel says, 'The four winds of heaven contended in the great sea,' that is, the worldly mind, by raising the mind from sensible to insensible things, by meditating on spiritual things, by discerning in them truth from falsehood, for the spiritual man judgeth all things, that is, all things which relate to life and justice. These five things relate to the discernment of the science of faith; but the rest which follow regard adhesion to the science of faith: the first of which is to delight in truth, the second to perfect the mind by truth, of which the prophet says, 'Et veritas tua, O Deus! usque ad nubes,' the third to rest in its complacency, 'congaudet veritati,' the fourth

* Ric. S. Vict. in Cant. Canticor. † Mystica Theologia.

to admire it ; and the fifth is consummate faith, to which is given by grace the knowledge of God, as is written, ‘ God appears to those who have faith in Him.’ Thirdly, the vision of God is communicated by glory—yet not permanently, but in a transitory manner, according to St. Bonaventura in his illuminations, and to Alexander de Hales, who says that by the perfect, by perfect contemplation, God can be seen, yet not fully, as after this life ; for, as Gregory saith, ‘ Sapiientia abscondita est ab oculis omnium viventium ;’ for he can be seen by certain circumscribed images, but not by the uncircumscribed light of eternity. Yet the eternal brightness of God has been intellectually seen by some, as by Jacob and the apostle Paul ; for the former says, ‘ Vidi Dominum facie ad faciem et salva facta est anima mea ;’ and the latter speaks of his being caught up to heaven by a miraculous operation of divine virtue. Blessed, then, the clean of heart, who, with the simple eye of their heart looking to God, contemplate celestial secrets to his glory—here by excellent grace, and hereafter by consummate glory *.”

It still remains to supplicate these angels upon earth, to mention briefly the effects which resulted from this mystic union of the soul with God. But first we may remark, that in their own wisdom they exemplify what by their teaching they attest : for, ask the biographer of St. Thomas, from whence did the Angel of the School derive his wisdom ? Tournon will reply, that he drew it in great measure from the close union of his soul with God, from the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, and of his cross. From the same fountain of living splendour were all the blessed luminaries of the ages of faith kindled and sustained. This it was, which raised the humble mind in a moment to understand more reasons of eternal truth, than could otherwise be known by one who had studied his whole life long in the schools : this it was, which yielded to the holy patriarch of hermits, Antony, that gift of wisdom, and that gift of faith, which made him such a wonderful ruler over the spirits of men, enabling him to convert innumerable heathens, and to draw after him to the desert thousands who already believed in Christ †. From this proceeded that sudden miraculous proficiency in mental attainments, not alone

* Sermo X.

† Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 197.

in wisdom, but in learning and science, which was seen in the Abbot Rupertus of Deutz, near Cologne, in the thirteenth century, in Albertus Magnus, in St. Lawrence Justinian, in St. Ignatius of Loyola, in Henry Dilson, in Charles of Saëta, in Candidus the Cistercian, in Hermannus Contractus, and in many others, including religious women, as Margaret the Dominicaness, Catharine of Cardona, Osanna of Mantua, Catharine of Sienna, and Rosa of Lima *. Yet, no doubt, than these extraordinary results, no less wondrous was the gift of faith—the principle and foundation of all other gifts.

“To the soul that seeketh him with a constant intention,” says Richard of St. Victor, “God revealeth himself, in whose presence it is renewed, and, as if adhering to him, it perceives a sweetness of internal taste, a spiritual intelligence, an illumination of faith, an increase of hope, an emotion of charity and compassion, a zeal of justice, a delight in virtue. Enlightened by this grace it begins to see the darkness of its heart, and to know itself, to perceive how many vices are hidden there under the appearance of virtues: for in the soul a new day arises after the night of ignorance, and it rejoices to have found, though as yet only imperfectly and in vow, him whom it loveth †.” Here then is revealed the secret of that intense faith which characterized these ages, for, says Louis of Blois, “When the spirit of man attains to that wisdom of mystic theology, namely, to that divine union, it is then illuminated with the light of eternal truth, its faith is rendered more certain, its hope is strengthened, its charity is inflamed. Therefore, if all the wise men of the world were to say to the man who had experienced the mystic union, ‘you are deceived, wretched man, your faith is not true,’ he would undoubtedly answer, ‘nay, it is you who are deceived, for my faith is most true and most certain:’ this he would answer firmly, having an ineffable foundation in his heart, not so much by the investigation of reason as by the union of love. Such a man certainly knows divinity better than the greatest number of learned masters, who, not being as yet admitted into the holy of holies, and into the secret chamber of the Eternal King, have not

* Id. ii. 196-207.

† Ric. S. Vict. in *Cantica Cant.*

been greatly illuminated with the light of grace*.” A Catholic philosopher of modern times has remarked this fact, that “it happens often in the sphere of faith, in relation to science and religion, that what in the beginning was merely a rational belief, changes afterwards by degrees into a deep and inward faith, a conviction still profounder, more personal, nay almost into an internal intuition or actual view of living truth†.” Frederick Schlegel, perhaps, had not read the passage of the schoolman, in which he explains the cause of this phenomena, showing how piety assists reason, and reason excites piety. “The mind,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “strengthened by reasonings, is excited to a more fervent devotion. Thence arises the third and perfect state of religion; for the man, being purified by devotion, begins to have a certain foretaste of the future, and with a clean heart hastens to that which is known by faith and devotion. So the purified conscience, by invisible testimony, and with a secret and familiar visitation of its God, is daily instructed and confirmed, in so much that it begins now to have him present by contemplation; and already by no reasoning, although the whole world should be turned into miracles, can it be separated from his faith and love. These, therefore, are the three steps of promotion in faith by which it rises to perfection. The first is to choose by piety, the second to approve by reason, the third to apprehend by truth‡.”

This mystic state is described by Hugo of St. Victor in a passage most remarkable§. “There are three visions of the rational soul—thought, meditation, and contemplation. Thought is when the mind is touched transitorily with a notion of things; meditation is a certain curious and sagacious power of mind, endeavouring to investigate obscure, and to unravel complicated things; contemplation is that vivacity of intelligence, which having all things open, comprehends them with manifest vision, so that what meditation seeks, contemplation possesses. In meditation there is as it were a certain struggle

* Instit. Spirit. cap. i.

† Schlegel, Philosophie der Sprache, 218.

‡ De Sacrament. lib. i. p. x. c. 4.

§ A Masterpiece of Middle Age Latinity.

of ignorance with science, and the light of truth shines as if in a certain middle state of darkness—like as fire at first with difficulty seizes upon green wood, but, when with wind vehemently excited, it begins to burn with greater intensity in the subject matter, then we see rise vast globes of smoky darkness, and the flame itself scarcely at rare intervals can be discerned, until at length the conflagration by degrees increasing, all vapour being exhausted, and darkness dissipated, the serene splendour may appear. Then the conquering flame rushing through the whole mass of the crackling pile, freely dominates, flying round the subject matter, and licking it with all pervading touch, burns and penetrates, nor rests until pervading it through its most intimate recesses, it draws all that it finds not itself into itself. But after that which is to be burned has lost all property of its own, and wholly passed into the similitude of fire, then all noise ceases, and every sound is hushed—the straws of flame raised aloft are borne away, and that cruel voracious fire, having subjected all things to itself, and incorporated them into a certain friendly similitude, composes itself into a deep and silent peace ; because it now finds nothing different from itself nor opposed to it. So in like manner the carnal heart, as if green wood, not yet dried from the humour of fleshly concupiscence, if any spark of the divine fear or love should fall upon it, at first, indeed, arises the smoke of passions and perturbations, reluctant with depraved desires ; then, the mind being strengthened when the flame of love begins more fiercely to burn, and more clearly to shine, all the darkness of perturbation ceases, and the soul with a pure mind pours itself out to the contemplation of truth. But, finally, after that the heart becomes penetrated with an assiduous contemplation of truth, and that with all the affection of the soul, it enters wholly into the very fountain of highest truth, then, as if become itself all fire, and changed into the flame of love, the noise and perturbation die away, and it rests in that supreme peace. Then, truly, when he is received with that intimate love, that besides himself there is nothing else left remaining in the heart, God is discerned to be all in all.”

The result of this mystic elevation of the highest spiritual faculties is ecstasy—whatever that may be to the

souls which suffer it, and they were many, as the Church attests. Angela of Foligny remained three—Ignatius Loyola, seven—Magdalen of Pazzi, eight days in ecstasy. Seven times each day Elizabeth of Spalbach was thus transported. The whole lives of some were ecstatic. The hermit Macarius spent nearly all his life in ecstasy, and the same is related of St. Francis of Assisi, Giles his disciple, Columba of Rieti, Gertrude of Oosten, Joseph of Copertino, and many others. Ecstasy in confession, as to Magdalen de Pazzi—ecstasy in communion, as to Catharine of Genoa, and innumerable saints—ecstasy in preaching, as to John of the cross—ecstasy in performing the ceremonies of holy week, as to Thomas of Villanova—ecstasy in singing, as to Christina of Stumbelen, and Petrus Petronius, the Carthusian—ecstasy in death, as to holy men and women without number, who departed singing in unearthly tones, to the embraces of their God *, were the gifts bestowed upon the clean of heart, in the churches, cloisters, and even secular houses of the ages of faith.

At one time the brightness of the mystic vision rendered them invisible, as in the instances related of Hermann Joseph of Steinfeld, Nevelo of Faventia, and the holy Bona of Pisa †. At another it encompassed them with heaven's own blessed light, visible even to others. While St. Bernardine was preaching in St. Martin's church, at Sienna, all the people beheld an illumination round him. Similarly St. Francis de Sales, while explaining the ten commandments, was encircled with a light which every one saw. The countenance of Camillo de Lellis, while he was preaching on the love of God, began to shine like the sun. At midnight, Esperanza of Brenegalla, in Valencia, adoring the blessed sacrament, was found encompassed with a splendour which lighted up the whole Church. The streams of lustre which issued from Hieronyma Carvallo, prevented the beholders from seeing the countenances of the poor gathered round him, who asked alms. The holy priest William, of the Cistercian order, beheld a light encircling the blessed John, as he sung the song of Zacharias, and directed the prior to notice it, who

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 398. 402 404.

† Id. ii. 339—43.

asked him, what had been his thoughts while they sung “*Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*:” he replied, “I thought I was in heaven surrounded with angels.” The prior again asked him concerning what he had in mind at the verse, “*Et tu Puer Propheta*:” when he answered, “I felt as if John the Baptist stood before me, and I became senseless through joy.”

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and the holy Hedwig of Poland, were both seen while praying, encompassed with a miraculous light, and the same is related of many others*. It was during such intervals that the transcendant prodigies, with which all holy history rings, were effected. It was then that the bodies of the saints were elevated above the ground†, transported from place to place‡, endued with a celestial fragrance§, given a taste of ineffable sweetness||, instantaneously healed from diseases, extatically assimilated to the divine Saviour, marked with a bleeding crown, pierced in the side¶, stigmatised to the complete imitation of the Son of God**. Then did they enjoy those gifts, which so visibly bespeak the joys of a world unlike ours—the gift of tears, streaming delicious tears—tears that were a wonder, and rightly denominated a gift from heaven, such a bliss spread through the soul as soon as they flowed forth, like the waters of a river, sweeping away black sorrow and disquietude, and trembling doubts; then came there the gift of jubilation ineffable, inconceivable, producing insensibility to all material objects around—the gift of utterance too of words, that surpass human intelligence, of tones unearthly, as if all that the soul had ever learned here below, were already blotted out and forgotten; and so in truth they were at least while that high triumph lasted, for in that heavenly banqueting, the soul, as Dante saith, outgrows herself, and in the transport lost, held now remembrance none of what she was††.

The uncertain and hidden things of divine wisdom are made manifest to her. “Were such intervals to be granted unto all who studied holiness, faith would lose its merit,” says one who had endured them; for what profane person

* Id. ii. 310—313.

† Id. ii. 515.

‡ 528. § 89.

|| 86.

¶ 410.

** 420.

†† Par. xxiii.

would not hail such consolation, if he could be sure of obtaining it? Such joys exceed all the delights of the world, and all the pleasures incident by nature to the heart of man. Then broke forth words of light, of seraphic fire, sounds surpassing all sense and reason. Witness those of Dionysius, speaking of seraphim, which Hugo of St. Victor concludes, "can be nothing else but words from a higher world." "Man," he observes, "does not speak so." "These words," he continues, "may be an echo of those unspeakable words which Paul heard when he was raised to the third heaven, and caught up to Paradise. These words came from the word itself, they could not certainly be spoken by him who thoroughly understood them, but yet something could be imparted by them, and that is in the words which we read. They are great as telling of immensity, dark as relating to what is concealed, deep as concerned with what is incomprehensible. They sound like a voice from heaven, and fill us with amazement; but they enlighten us not. Even as some thought that they heard thunder, others an angel, not God himself, so also we. But our amazement must attract us higher, the words must become a sweeter music—an enjoyment, we must learn to love them; then we shall understand them. If I be less excited to knowledge I shall be incited to love, and meanwhile love itself will be refection, until from it will arise contemplation, by which illumination cometh."

The holy Hildegard used to apply to things divine and human names that were unknown to others, and Goërres has published a kind of Glossary to them, which is found in an ancient manuscript. He supposes that the images presented to her in mystic visions could not suggest the ordinary words of man*. But our limits are already overpast, we must not remain here longer, and even listening to such things, is not for ears of uncleansed flesh and blood. These living splendours of the times of faith, rise up now and move from our view. Intellectual extremes have met long enough while they conversed with us. They must proceed upwards, and we descend sorrowing, though not without hope to the blind sordid world again. Yet, reader, if it hath not been thy lot to

* Die Christliche Mystik, ii, 152.

mourn always with the lost and separate, there must be light prepared for thee below, for thou must have known some faithful tender souls to which these visions have been granted. Thou must have observed the silence, the motionless suspension, the tears, the overflowing joy when Christ appears in humble veil upon the lighted altar. Then thou canst understand the long tract of ages by the holy past; then thou canst in some degree conceive with what hopes they looked forward to the clearer vision of another world; for, if such be the victim, self-annihilated as it were on the altar, what will be the Creator visible in his glory? The mystic view, intelligential and obscure, is peace to the heart of man, what will be the unveiled and perfect manifestation of the eternal godhead? "*Reliquiæ cogitationum diem festum agent tibi,*" saith the prophet king. "Think," adds Richard of St. Victor, "what will be the solemnity in the abundance of that view if a festival is celebrated out of the leavings of thoughts*."

Some there are, albeit, adorned with bewitching smiles, whose heart, save their Maker, none can to the full possess, watching it no less than she above, who would have all her court be like herself. One have I known, who not from that day when on this earth I first beheld her charms, has ever ceased with inward song adoring to converse with Christ, his blessed mother, and the saints. O thou pure and loving soul, what will it be after so many prayers, so many genuflexions, so many stolen vigils in the stilly night, so many communions prepared for with all thy poor strength, so many kisses bestowed upon the crucifix and holy relics ever next thy bosom, so many aves murmured on the beads, so many tears and prostrations while singing "*Tantum ergo* and *O Salutaris Hostia,*" at the benediction of each closing day, which to thee even in youth was joy, mirth, rapture, every thing—what will it be, I say, after all this life of expectation and desire infinite, of alternate joy and sorrow, of light and darkness passing through the heart, to behold thy God, where days end not, where blessed moments change not, where the vision of glory fades not through eternal years? O spirit, born for joy, who in the rays of life angelic, dost already taste that sweetness, what will be thy

* De Grad. Charit.

radiance then? And where will be the poor heart dwelling within this dust, that now can only wonder at thy beauty?

A smile sits painted on the cheek of these high teachers, and their fixed gaze bends on the point at which my vision fails—then their words resuming, they begin, “let us behold with the blessed thy countenance, O Christ God, the joy which is immense and excellent! O, what delight to mix in the choir of angels, to be in perpetual society with patriarchs and prophets, with holy Apostles and martyrs, with confessors and virgins, with the glorious Mary, mother of God! No more fear, no more sorrow, no more indifference, no more fatigue, no more vexation. There is an end of labour and obstacles, of disgusts and wants. O what riches of consolation, what affluence of delight, what overflowings of joy! What an abyss of pure pleasure to behold that boundless and beautiful light, that ineffable glory of the most holy Trinity, to see the God of gods on the mountain of Zion, to see him no longer in enigma, but face to face—to see the glorious humanity of the only Son of God!

O! what pure prayers were offered day and night before those altars of the middle age, imploring grace for virtue yet more high to understand—the supreme bliss. Truly, these were the generations seeking him—seeking the face of the God of Jacob. There methinks I see them kneel, beseeching him through saints and angels, and above all his Mother ever blest, to drive each cloud of their mortality away, that on the sovereign joy unveiled they may soon for ever gaze. “Good Jesus,” they exclaim with Thomas, “when shall I stand to behold thee? When shall I contemplate the glory of thy kingdom? When wilt thou be to me all in all?” These perfect souls, as Richard of St. Victor wished, devoted to the contemplation of highest things, at every hour of their pilgrimage expected, with the utmost desire, the departure from their present labour, in order to behold that which they held through faith shown in itself intelligibly plain. Like Abraham who used to sit at the door of his tent; like Elias who used to stand at the mouth of his cave—they stood prepared to go out to hail the Lord’s coming*. “Quando veniam et apparebo

* De Contemplat. p. i. lib. iv. c. 10.

ante faciem Dei? My little sons," adds the saintly Bernard after repeating these words, "let us desire the courts of the Lord, let us breathe after them. Our country is there—let us at least adore it from a distance, let us from afar salute it."—Amen.

B

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

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